



Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5849th meeting

Tuesday, 11 March 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Viločić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2008/98)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2008/98)

The President (spoke in Russian): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Mulet to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/98, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Mulet: Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Council on Darfur. I will begin with an update on the security and humanitarian situation, in particular the recent violence in West Darfur and its consequences for civilians, as well as on the actions of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), given its mandated responsibilities and capacity constraints. I will then provide a detailed overview of UNAMID's deployment status and priorities.

As the Council is aware, following the offensive carried out by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) against the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) in Sirba and Seleia, north of El Geneina, West Darfur, in

late December 2007 and early January 2008, the Government of the Sudan launched a large-scale ground and air military campaign aimed at reasserting Government control over those towns, which JEM had labelled "liberated lands", as well as over the JEM and Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) stronghold area of Jebel Moon. The tactics used by the Government included joint Sudanese Armed Forces/Janjaweed militia attacks supported by fighter jets, helicopter gunships and Antonov aircraft. Humanitarian agencies were extremely concerned by the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian assets, in particular clinics and water points in Jebel Moon. The tactics used by the Government included joint Sudanese Armed Forces/Janjaweed militia attacks supported by fighter jets, helicopter gunships and Antonov aircraft. Humanitarian agencies were extremely concerned by the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian assets, in particular clinics and water points in Jebel Moon.

A massive Government attack on Abu Suruj, Sirba and Seleia on 8 February, when we last briefed the Council, was later shown to have caused numerous deaths and tens of thousands of new displacements. On 18 February, the Government and Janjaweed militia attacked JEM and SLA-Abdul Wahid positions in Aro Sharow and the Kandare and Kurlungo areas of Jebel Moon, as well as the Wahid stronghold of Deribat, further to the east in Jebel Marra. Fighting between Government forces and JEM and SLA-Wahid rebels, supported by Chad, continued in Jebel Moon on 22 and 23 February, as well as 26 and 27 February. As a result of the violence, at least 70 civilians have been killed, 13,000 have sought refuge in Chad, and 20,000 are said to be trapped by the violence in Jebel Moon.

Joint Special Representative Adada has been active in engaging the Government on the issue and has visited the areas affected by the crisis. Together with the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sudan, he met with senior defence and humanitarian Government officials in Khartoum on 23 February and urged the Government to replace military personnel with national police in the area of Seleia; suspend hostilities through a ceasefire, allowing for a period of tranquillity that would permit civilians to move to safety in that area; and allow humanitarian organizations to provide assistance to civilians.

A 10-day period of relative tranquillity indeed followed those discussions between UNAMID and the Government, during which UNAMID sent daily

military and police patrols from Kulbus and El Geneina to the northern corridor to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance. As a result of that assistance, 90 per cent of the population of Sirba and Abu Suruj have returned. In Seleia, however, which suffered large-scale destruction, only 1,500 of the 20,000 civilians have returned. The population's reluctance to return to the town is reportedly due to the presence of large numbers of Government troops in the area. UNAMID believes that a company of soldiers from the Sudanese Armed Forces is present within Seleia, while a brigade — or about 2,400 soldiers — is in the area surrounding the town. Additionally, there are reports of looting and harassment of women by Sudanese Armed Forces and Government-allied militia in and around Seleia.

On 5 March, the Government indicated to the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and UNAMID that it will send 500 central police to Seleia. That will be a positive development. The area of Jebel Moon, however, remains inaccessible. Government air strikes in Jebel Moon resumed on 9 March, and we are extremely concerned about the safety of 20,000 civilians who continue to be trapped in the area. In addition, there are indications that a retaliation by JEM may take place once it has had time to regroup.

During February, there was also a marked upsurge in violence in South Darfur. On 29 February, in two separate incidents, Government patrols were ambushed at Amr Gedid and Domaya, north of Nyala, by SLA-Unity and Arab militia respectively, and seven Government soldiers were reportedly killed and 22 injured in the attacks. On 1 March, a commercial convoy of 43 trucks and fuel tankers accompanied by a Government police escort was ambushed by SLA-Unity forces near Gabat Hamada, 85 kilometres north of Nyala. Six Government soldiers were reportedly killed and six wounded in the attack, and three tankers were stolen.

There were also security incidents involving inter-tribal fighting in both North and South Darfur. On 27 February, a group of approximately 160 men on horses and camels from the Rizeigat and Salamat tribes attacked Habaniya tribesmen in the town of El Sunita in South Darfur and killed 21 people. On 28 February, the Habaniya retaliated and killed 60 people in the area east of Gereida. In North Darfur, fighting between the Zaghawa and Beni Hussein tribes is reported to have

displaced approximately 300 people during the reporting period.

In another disturbing development, on 3 March a French special forces officer of the European Union-led peacekeeping force was killed and another was wounded by Sudanese Armed Forces fire when they accidentally crossed into the Sudan. It is clear that the tensions between Chad and the Sudan and fighting carried out by proxy rebel forces have the potential to regionalize the crisis and derail international peace efforts on both sides of the border. The normalization of relations between the two countries is essential if international efforts to restore stability are to succeed. Tomorrow's summit in Dakar between Presidents Bashir and Déby at the invitation of President Wade is an important opportunity in that regard.

In response to the Government's actions in West Darfur, on 5 March the Secretary-General called Foreign Minister Deng Alor and made clear that, notwithstanding arguments of the Government of the Sudan that its actions are in response to the military engagement of rebel movements, civilian suffering of that scale is unacceptable and is sending signals to the international community that the Government has no regard for the lives of its citizens or for humanitarian law. The Secretary-General also stressed that those actions were undermining prospects for political negotiations and posed fundamental challenges to the ability of UNAMID to fulfil its mandate.

Mr. Eliasson has also talked to senior JEM and SLA-Abdul Wahid representatives and asked them to cease all hostilities. JEM said it would be unwilling to stop fighting unless a ceasefire were part of a broader political framework and discussions on security arrangements. That is an extremely problematic position when we consider the civilian suffering that has been caused by the fighting.

While the Government has the primary responsibility to protect civilians, UNAMID has a strong complementary mandate in that regard that it will not be in a position to comprehensively implement until a critical mass of properly trained and equipped new troops and enabling assets are in place. Within its current capabilities, UNAMID vehicle patrols have been mounted into the area south of Jebel Moon from both Kulbus and El Geneina. Those limited operations will continue as long as the situation in the area remains tense. The longer-term intent is to reinforce

Kulbus with additional troops so as to permit the continuous deployment from there to Seleia of at least a platoon. UNAMID police will also increase their presence in Seleia as soon as appropriate facilities are built. It will take some weeks, however, to establish camp, resupply and communications facilities for a sustained presence in Seleia, since no provisions have heretofore been made for basing troops there.

The Force Commander has also increased his contacts with the parties in order for the Mission to better assess their movements, intent and capabilities, while also instilling within them the confidence that UNAMID is an impartial actor in Darfur. The Mission continues to work with the Government, JEM and SLA-Abdul Wahid to ensure that the civilians trapped by the fighting are given safe passage to a secure location.

The fighting in Darfur makes clear that preparing for political negotiations does not seem to be a priority for either the Government or rebel movements. The implications are dire. On the one hand, negotiations are required to bring this crisis to an end. But with the Government intent on military action and the rebels either fighting or fragmenting, it is difficult to see an opening for political negotiations. On the other hand, a peacekeeping operation alone cannot bring security to Darfur.

Nevertheless, we are pressing forward to implement the Council's resolutions and to do all we can to improve the situation. At the same time, it is important to recognize that UNAMID has a long way to go and is far from having a meaningful presence on the ground. We continue to face difficulties in our efforts to reinforce the Mission, in security, in consistent levels of cooperation with the Government, logistical constraints and force shortfalls.

As at 10 March, UNAMID's total strength was 9,178 uniformed personnel, including 7,441 military personnel, 1,597 police officers and one formed police unit. A total of 1,312 civilians were deployed as at that date. The majority of the military and police personnel currently in the Mission was inherited from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). In addition, the 135-person advance party of the Chinese engineer company is now permanently based in the Nyala supercamp, where it continues its work to develop the infrastructure for the Mission in that town. The unit's main body of 175 troops is scheduled to complete its

deployment to Nyala by early April. The formed police unit from Bangladesh is co-located with the Chinese engineering unit in Nyala and is patrolling on a daily basis.

During the coming weeks, we look forward to the deployment of a number of additional enabling units and infantry to UNAMID, and the beginning of scheduled rotations of current troops. The Egyptian transport unit is scheduled to arrive in Nyala this Sunday, 16 March, and the Egyptian engineer unit is scheduled to arrive in El Geneina on 24 March. The Nigerian level-II hospital is scheduled to arrive in El Geneina during the first week of April.

With respect to the deployment of additional infantry units to UNAMID, the Egyptian battalion is expected to deploy its lead company group to Nyala on 19 March, with the remainder of the battalion completing its deployment on 15 April. The Ethiopian battalion's lead company group is scheduled to arrive in El Fasher on 7 April. The remainder of the Ethiopian battalion will complete its deployment on 15 May.

As agreed with the Government of the Sudan, preparations for the deployment of the Thai infantry battalion and the Nepalese force and sector reserve units continue, and their deployments are scheduled to take place once the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions have arrived in Darfur. The remaining five African infantry battalions are not expected to deploy before mid-2008, when their major equipment procurement and initial training programmes have been completed.

The timely deployment of those battalions will be linked to donor countries' efforts to support troop contributors with equipment, training and self-sustainment capability. We are grateful to the United States and Canada for their initiative to establish a group of friends of UNAMID, which will work with troop-contributing countries to accelerate the readiness of their troops to deploy. The priority for this support is to increase the capacity of the existing ex-AMIS troops and their rotations, which are due to deploy in the next three to four months. It is absolutely critical that the incoming troops have self-sustaining capability and equipment to enable them to patrol and effectively carry out their operations. As Force Commander Agwai has said over and over, without self-sustainment, incoming troops are a burden to the Mission and become part of the problem, not the solution.

Preparations are also under way for the arrival of the next three formed police units, from Nepal, Indonesia and Egypt. The major equipment of the Nepalese formed police unit arrived in Port Sudan on 18 February. The Mission is working with Sudanese authorities to ensure the speedy release and transportation of that equipment.

The Council will recall that the transportation of the Chinese engineering and Bangladeshi formed police unit equipment took seven weeks in November and December last year, during which the units were not operational. We cannot afford a repeat of those delays, and we look to the Government of the Sudan to facilitate the administrative and security arrangements for the earliest possible arrival of UNAMID cargo in the area of operations.

With the exception of Ethiopia's pledge of four light tactical helicopters, credible offers for utility helicopters and the remainder of the light tactical helicopters, aerial reconnaissance aircraft and logistics and transport units remain outstanding. Those mission-critical gaps make the job of deploying UNAMID extremely difficult. We urge the Council once again to support our efforts to find and deploy those assets to the Mission as soon as possible.

In the short term, the ability of UNAMID to absorb new units is constrained by its limited logistical capacity and the lack of mission enablers for the establishment of transit accommodations. But it ultimately depends on the level of self-sustainment of the incoming units.

The force is also facing challenges in its transition from the AMIS to the UNAMID logistics supply system. Similarly, the mission is further hampered by ageing equipment inherited from AMIS. Until the process of AMIS asset liquidation is complete, communication equipment and vehicles transferred from AMIS cannot be processed for United Nations registration, licensing and maintenance. As a result, many of the computers, radios and vehicles used by former AMIS military and police personnel are incompatible with United Nations networks and standards. Given the implications for the effectiveness of the force's command and control, as well as for its morale, the United Nations is working with the AMIS liquidation team to complete that work as soon as possible.

In authorizing the deployment of UNAMID, the Security Council committed significant resources as part of its overall effort to contribute to a solution to the crisis in Darfur. That investment is at risk due to a number of well-known challenges. Foremost among them are the security situation and the determination of some parties to continue to pursue their objectives through military means, with such a devastating impact on the civilian population.

At the same time, if we are to reconfigure UNAMID into a robust, credible and proactive peacekeeping presence, we must redouble our efforts to work with troop- and police-contributing countries to address the practical challenges faced by the Mission, such as gaps in force composition and the readiness of incoming troops.

But UNAMID cannot be a substitute for political engagement. UNAMID is one element of an international strategy. When fully deployed, the Mission will address a broad range of responsibilities, the protection of civilians being foremost among them. But it will not be a tool for addressing the causes of the conflict. The vitality of the political process is critical to real lasting progress.

According to Special Envoys Eliasson and Salim, the situation on the political front is not promising. With the movements having made little progress in terms of unifying their positions and agreeing on a negotiating team, there is little prospect of beginning substantive negotiations with the parties any time soon. In particular, the two most significant political and military factions — the JEM-Khalil Ibrahim and the Sudan Liberation Movement Abdul Wahid faction — remain outside the process.

In addition to the Government's clear commitment to a military solution, there is also disagreement between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the National Congress Party on the Darfur question. The lack of a clear Darfur strategy in the Government of National Unity itself, including regarding the role of Minni Minnawi, does not indicate seriousness about making peace.

On 17 and 18 March, the United Nations and African Union envoys will convene informal consultations with regional and international partners at Geneva to take stock of the situation and hopefully to reach an understanding on the way forward.

Meanwhile, the continued hostilities in Darfur serve as a stark reminder that urgent international engagement and concrete action are necessary to encourage and pressure the parties to the conflict to lay down their weapons and commit themselves to the path of dialogue.

The President (spoke in Russian): I thank Mr. Mulet for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.



Security Council

Sixty-third year

Provisional

5850th meeting

Tuesday, 11 March 2008, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Letter dated 6 March 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/162)

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08-26760 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Letter dated 6 March 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/162)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Serbia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and Rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jeremić (Serbia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in response to the request contained in a letter dated 6 March 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations, document S/2008/162.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Mr. Jeremić (Serbia): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Security Council.

Once again, we gather here to discuss troubling developments in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo and Metohija, under the administration of the United Nations since June 1999. And once again we are compelled to discuss the dangerous consequences of the unilateral, illegal and illegitimate declaration of independence by the Kosovo's Provisional Institutions

of Self-Government, which took place on 17 February of this year. With that declaration, a direct assault on the innate operating logic of the international system was committed, for Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) places a binding Chapter VII obligation on all Member States to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia.

Those 20 or so countries that furthered the secessionist cause of the Kosovo Albanians have contributed to making the international system more unstable, more insecure and more unpredictable. Recognizing the unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence from Serbia legitimizes the doctrine of imposing solutions to ethnic conflicts. It legitimizes the act of unilateral secession by a provincial or other non-State actor. It transforms the right to self-determination into an avowed right to independence. It legitimizes the forced partition of internationally recognized sovereign States. And it provides any ethnic or religious group with a grievance against its capital with a playbook on how to achieve its ends.

I want to be very clear: we will never recognize the attempt by the authorities in Pristina to unilaterally secede from Serbia. We call upon the countries that have recognized that attempt to reconsider, and we call on those that have not done so to stay the course and to help us continue to defend the international system from being fundamentally undermined.

With a frankness that we owe to those most directly affected by this perilous precedent, but also with an eye to those who could be affected in the time to come, let us ask ourselves the following questions. Have the principles of international relations been advanced by wrenching Kosovo away from a democratically governed country? Will the province of Kosovo, as an entity-in-limbo that cannot acquire the international legitimacy arising out of membership in the United Nations, be able to achieve sustainable prosperity without Belgrade? And have regional stability and cooperation been increased by the perverse choice that our neighbours are being forced to make — a choice between Serbia and Kosovo?

Since 17 February, the situation on the ground has been deteriorating, which has made it more difficult to control. This is not where we should be.

Understandably, the public reaction in Serbia to Pristina's unilateral declaration of independence has been clear and loud. For the vast majority of Serbs, it

has been a dignified reaction. Hundreds of thousands assembled in Belgrade on 21 February to express their sorrow peacefully, and to do so in worship. Young and old, rich and poor, they came from all corners of Serbia to demonstrate their opposition to the forcible partition of their country.

It is tragic that a small proportion of those who gathered in Belgrade on that day turned to violence. The assault on foreign embassies, downtown stores and Government buildings was as unacceptable as it was deplorable. Allow me to express, on behalf of my Government, our unreserved regret to those countries whose embassies were damaged. They have our assurances that all measures have been taken to ensure that something like that will not happen again.

Violence is not the answer — not in Belgrade, not in Mitrovica, not in Pristina. Nowhere in Serbia is violence the answer. But violence has been a reality for too long in our southern province. That which took place under a dictatorship in the 1990s was terrible and should never be minimized.

And yet, I remind this Council that our Serbian collective experience has been marked by the memory of what happened in the period after June 1999. In peacetime, with the United Nations present, hundreds of thousands of Serbs were expelled from Kosovo. Tens of thousands of Serbian homes were torched to the ground. Thousands of Serbs were murdered or are still missing and presumed dead. And more than 150 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries were destroyed. The province's Serbs were abandoned to pogroms carefully orchestrated and brutally executed by Kosovo Albanians, who have been rewarded for their violent conduct.

The Republic of Serbia will not accept the imposition of an outcome that fundamentally violates our legitimate national interests. So long as these attempts by some to exclude us continue, we will keep coming back to this body and to all other relevant bodies, and we will employ all legal, diplomatic and political means at our disposal to continue asserting our core sovereign rights.

By the same token, I underline to the Council Serbia's preparedness to move constructively forward. We must overcome the danger of imposing realities that have no legal basis, for such attempts only create defensive, self-preservationist moves that drive us further apart. We must start talking honestly to one

another to assess the decisions that have been taken, the mistakes that have been made, the threats that have arisen and the accommodations that must be made.

We must meet and reason together. And we must work in concert to instil the confidence necessary for all the Western Balkans to once again take bold, historic steps towards a common European future. For I believe that none of us can afford any more missed opportunities to build trust, to seek agreement, to consolidate values and to arrive at a just, mutually acceptable solution that will benefit us all.

The alternative to handling this issue with great care and reverence for the United Nations Charter, with great respect for the reputation and legacy of United Nations peacekeeping and with great concern for the credibility of the Secretary-General is simply too bleak to fathom. In short, what we must do is to turn our minds from wondering what will happen next to wondering together about what we can still accomplish.

I would like to emphasize that Serbia wishes no ill to the ethnic Albanians in our southern province. We continue to take seriously their right to obtain substantial self-governance while remaining under a common sovereign roof with Serbia. It is in our vital interest that all of Kosovo's communities prosper — and prosper together — in peace, security and reconciliation as neighbours in a progressive society of hope and forgiveness. That is why Serbia does not intend to impose an embargo, and it is why we have a clear policy of not resorting to the force of arms.

At the same time, we will continue to ensure that the Serbs of Kosovo do not remain relegated to a fearful life of ghettoized isolation, as they have been for the past eight years. We will ensure that their future is based on tangible assurances, rather than on vague promises and unlawful jurisdictions.

Resolution 1244 (1999) must be observed in full. That is the only way to prevent a further deterioration of the situation on the ground. There must be no erosion of the clearly defined mandate of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) by the Security Council. Therefore, we strongly demand that no further transfer of competencies from UNMIK to any other body take place. That is of vital importance.

Let me assure the Security Council that the Republic of Serbia will continue to comply with resolution 1244 (1999). Unfortunately, others have taken the divisive step of making their own interpretation of the resolution to suit some short-sighted purposes. It is a great pity that some European countries have joined in that dubious exercise, first by recognizing the unilateral declaration of independence by the authorities in Pristina, thereby gravely setting back the region's European prospects, and then by establishing the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the affiliated International Steering Group (ISG) of countries.

Both EULEX and the ISG have set for themselves the goal of assisting in the implementation of the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement — the so-called Ahtisaari proposal — but the Proposal has never been endorsed by the Security Council, which is the only institution endowed with the power to legitimate changes in the nature of the international presence in Kosovo.

It is therefore the basic position of the Republic of Serbia that both EULEX and the ISG operate well outside the parameters set forth by resolution 1244 (1999) and that their activities are strongly inconsistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. Let me be clear: It is not that the European Union is unwelcome in our southern province — for we do welcome, as a matter of principle, any demonstration of Europe's deepening commitment to our country, including Kosovo — but there has to be a clear legal mandate for any such commitment, and that can be achieved only by getting the approval of the Security Council. We must work together to overcome that problem within this very forum.

President Boris Tadić spoke a few days ago of our willingness to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union immediately. Despite our present troubles, I wish to reaffirm that principled position — one which a solid majority of our countrymen share. Our heritage, our culture, our beliefs and our history are profoundly European. Europe has developed into a storehouse of values that creates stability and security in our historically divided continent. It has become the antidote to isolation, protectionism, fear, extremism and war. It brings people together, expands markets, points to a more prosperous tomorrow, solidifies the gains made, and

inspires attempts at resolving differences in line with the higher aspirations of humankind, instead of giving in to our basest instincts.

To construct and to integrate, and so to grasp the infinite opportunities that the twenty-first century offers to the bold and to the visionary — that is the kind of Europe to which we are committed and to which we hope to belong. Regrettably, we have come to the chasm. Let us now try to join together in order to build a bridge over it, to look beyond the immediate divide and to secure a future in Europe for the entire western Balkans.

The Republic of Serbia stands ready to be a constructive partner in the achievement of regional peace, stability and reconciliation. We are committed to open dialogue and good-faith negotiations, and we continue to be faithful to the principles of international law. The Republic of Serbia is ready. We are ready to host a series of meetings with UNMIK on a whole host of issues, such as the status of the Kosovo Serb population and that of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the question of customs points, and the status of Kosovo Serb judges and policemen in our southern province, as well as all others.

We have to solve concrete problems, we have to address the real life concerns of the province's most vulnerable, and we have to pay attention to the human cost of our actions. Every day that goes by without working towards some sort of agreement creates unsustainable hopes, irrational fears and dangerous, uncoordinated outcomes on the ground. Let me reiterate Serbia's principled, deeply held position that regional peace and security can be consolidated through dialogue, not imposition; through agreement, not compulsion; and through law, not might.

Tomorrow is the fifth anniversary of the tragic assassination of Serbia's first democratically elected prime minister, Mr. Zoran Djindjic. He was the engine of our democratic success and the visionary of our place in Europe. A month before he was murdered, Mr. Djindjic wrote a series of letters to world leaders on the question of Kosovo's future status in Serbia and Serbia's future status in Europe. He wrote of his vision of a Serbia as proud of its European future as it is proud of its national past. He wrote about the importance of preserving our identity while broadening its scope, and he wrote that "the worst option is for

things to happen in Kosovo without our participation and without our objective responsibility”.

Well, the worst option, as Mr. Djindjic called it, has been attempted by people who should have known better. Those outside actors chose to sacrifice regional geostrategic priorities on the altar of the extremist communal aspirations of the Kosovo Albanians, and they chose expediency over statecraft. The international system wobbles precariously as a result, but it can be steadied. By acting together, I believe we can overcome our differences on Kosovo in the weeks and months ahead.

Elections will take place in Serbia in May. The result will be a turning point for my country and for all the western Balkans, for it will be a time of great decision. Real, concrete differences exist in Serbia on economic and social issues and on the crucial issue of Serbia's future in Europe. Each citizen of Serbia will be called on to make a clear and compelling choice, but let me be clear on what the election will not be about. It will not be about Serbia's policy towards its breakaway province of Kosovo and Metohija.

Make no mistake; on that fundamental issue — on the question that concerns the very nature of the identity of the Serbian nation — there is no disagreement in Serbia. My country is strongly united on Kosovo, and we will always remain so. We will continue defending our sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will remain steadfast in our determination to help our brethren overcome their present discontent, and we will build on our unity, forged by Kosovo, to preserve a democratic Serbia that is whole, free and comprehensively engaged with a world community strengthened by the reaffirmation of the legitimacy of the international system. Kosovo shall remain a part of Serbia forever.

Thank you, Sir, for having given me the opportunity to address the Council at a time of great consequence for us all.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.

**Security Council**

Sixty-third year

*Provisional***5851st** meeting

Wednesday, 12 March 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2008/159)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2008/159)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Iceland, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2008/159).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Before giving him the floor, I wish, on behalf of the members, to welcome the appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. I also welcome his presence at this meeting before assuming his important duties in Afghanistan. We look forward to working closely with him and wish him good luck and success in his new and challenging assignment.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking you, Sir, for your initiative of convening this open debate on Afghanistan. The many members who have asked to speak today vividly remind us of how many friends Afghanistan has in the international community, and reflect the determination we all share to help Afghanistan rebuild, reconcile and fulfil the aspirations of the Bonn Agreement and the Afghanistan Compact.

I am pleased to be accompanied today by Mr. Bo Asplund, who has ably led the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) since the departure of Tom Koenigs last December, and, above all, by Ambassador Kai Eide, whom, as the President just noted, the Secretary-General has recently appointed as his new Special Representative for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA. He will bring new dynamism to our efforts. In that regard, I would like to thank all the Member States that have expressed their strong support for him as he takes up his duties in Kabul.

The report (S/2008/159) of the Secretary-General, which was released last week, speaks for itself. It describes frankly the difficulties we have faced, especially in the past year. However, we have learned some important lessons by virtue of those difficulties, which we must now apply. In particular, we have an increasingly shared diagnosis of the main obstacles

before us. We face an insurgency that has proven to be more robust than we expected, as well as more ruthless than we ever imagined. Afghan governmental institutions remain fragile. Being without sufficient capacity, they are even more fragile due to the corrosive and destructive practices of corruption. A massive illegal drug economy is thriving in the context of the State's weak authority. It has also abetted the insurgency and undermined the State. The regional environment is complex and national interests are sometimes pursued at the expense of an effort to mutually support stability in Afghanistan in a coordinated manner. Finally, the international community, while certainly being committed and generous, has also too often been insufficiently united on crucial issues relating to the strategy in Afghanistan. The United Nations bears its own share of responsibility for the deficiencies in international coordination. We recognize that and, as I will explain during this briefing, we are working to correct it. However, we also need the cooperation of our international and Afghan partners.

In the light of that common diagnosis of the problems before us, the Security Council now has the important responsibility of renewing UNAMA's mandate. Despite important progress in Afghanistan — in particular in the areas of education and public health — and despite a fast-growing economy, we still face the serious problems I have just mentioned. Given the evolution of the situation during the past two years, now is the time to confront those challenges and to make the necessary changes and corrections in course. For that reason, the Secretary-General has included in his report a section on UNAMA's mandate that we hope will assist the Council in its decisions on the Mission's future.

(spoke in English)

UNAMA's current mandate is the product of negotiations with the Afghan Government and key partners that took place at the end of 2005. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report of 6 March, we feel that that mandate is still appropriate, and is sufficiently broad to fulfil our objectives. We have therefore not sought to change or expand UNAMA's mandate. We do not feel, in other words, that UNAMA needs additional powers. We do think, however, that, in the face of the evolved situation, the mandate needs to be sharpened. That is why the Secretary-General has proposed the six areas of focus set out in paragraph 64

of his report. I would like to draw the Council's attention to a few of those areas of focus. The first one is the coordination of international assistance.

The Secretary-General's recommendations on that essential question are the culmination of a discussion that began in September of last year at the high-level meeting on Afghanistan held at the margins of the General Assembly. We heard the very clear calls made by many participants for the United Nations to enhance its coordination efforts. We subsequently began consultations with Member States, the Afghan Government and within UNAMA on how best to achieve that. Those discussions were carried forward to the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) meeting in Tokyo last month. Among the conclusions of the Tokyo meeting was that the Compact remains the expression of the international partnership with the Afghan Government, that the JCMB constitutes the primary coordination body to oversee that partnership, and that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, when it is presented at the Paris conference in June, will be the blueprint to implement the goals of the Compact.

There are, therefore, two key issues to ensuring that all of that leads to improvements in the lives of all Afghans. The first is that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy must be given as much support as possible; the second is that the JCMB must be able to play an effective role. The Secretary-General's recommendations reflect those two priorities. Support for the Afghanistan National Development Strategy means that donors provide more of their funds through the Afghan core budget. Strengthening the JCMB means ensuring that it is at least aware of all the major assistance projects taking place in the country and can identify whether certain sectors or provinces are being under-served and be in a position to propose adjustments. The JCMB secretariat may need to be strengthened so as to organize and analyze such data.

The second issue is UNAMA's relationship with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). That relationship rests on two firm pillars: our common goals and our complementary but distinct mandates, both of which have their source in the Security Council. In the time since NATO assumed leadership of ISAF, we have created mechanisms for coordination and learned how to work with each other — at the provincial level, where Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and UNAMA offices interact; at the

Kabul level, between the UNAMA leadership and ISAF headquarters in Kabul; and at the headquarters level, in New York and Brussels. We look forward to the Bucharest meeting on Afghanistan to be held in early April, when NATO will present its own comprehensive approach. The Secretary-General will attend that meeting, demonstrating the high priority we ascribe to this relationship and to achieving success in Afghanistan.

The third issue that I wanted to highlight is the upcoming elections. The United Nations played a significant role in the 2004 and 2005 elections, where we not only provided technical advice but were also co-responsible for the elections through our presence in the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB). We remain willing to provide support for the next cycle of elections, with the understanding that, unlike the previous cycle, the Afghan Independent Electoral Commission will be clearly in the lead. The registration of voters and the holding of elections will require significant financial support from the international community. We are working with the Electoral Commission to complete the plans so that we can submit them to donors. The obstacles should not be underestimated, nor should the stakes. We have learned from other peace operations that the second set of post-conflict elections is often more critical than the first. That will likely be the case for Afghanistan. We are reviewing our structures and resources to ensure that we can react immediately, once we receive a request for assistance and once Afghan authorities make the required decisions on the electoral date and on essential electoral legislation. I encourage the Afghan Government and legislative institutions to take those decisions without further delay.

The issue of political outreach remains central to our efforts. Mr. Asplund recently met with President Karzai and was reassured by the President that he fully supports UNAMA's efforts to reach out to the Afghan public, especially those Afghans who feel alienated from their Government and are not opposed to the Constitution and are not targets of United Nations sanctions under the process initiated by resolution 1267 (1999). In order to be more effective, we will strengthen our field presence by adding international staff to UNAMA's seven provincial offices created over the last 18 months, as approved in the last budget. We are also about to undertake an assessment, in close cooperation with the Department of Safety and

Security, of UNAMA's field activities, with a view to possibly opening new field offices where security permits.

In order for our outreach activities to be credible, they must be backed up by improved governance, especially at the local level. We are supporting the recently established Independent Directorate for Local Governance, the main vehicle for improving subnational governance, strengthening the ties between the local and central governments. UNAMA also supported the design of the National Justice Programme, which is focused on increasing Afghan capacity to deliver legal services, ensure public access to courts and legal aid and improve public awareness of their rights and processes of legal redress.

This initiative addresses both the extension of the rule-of-law and local-level government, and I strongly urge Member States to ensure that it is adequately funded.

Finally, with regard to illegal narcotics, which I mentioned as a key factor undermining both Afghanistan's security and governance, I was pleased that the JCMB was able to agree upon an implementation plan for the counter-narcotics strategy. The discussions during the drafting of this plan led to the resolution of policy differences that had undermined our common anti-narcotic efforts. UNAMA and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provided technical advice that helped this consensus to emerge. We expect, in the future, to continue providing this sort of technical advice and policy guidance to both the Afghan Government and its international partners. In particular, as we have often stated, we need to focus on security sector reform and especially on the development of the Afghan National Police. I remain hopeful that the reform initiatives, which have begun but have been slow to take effect, are being accelerated under the International Police Coordination Board, which was tasked at the JCMB Tokyo meeting with overseeing the implementation of those reforms.

In presenting the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/159), I have focused on only a few of the many issues it addresses. Looking at the future, we must be pragmatic, but we must also be ambitious. I am sure that soon enough Ambassador Eide will have his own observations on the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, as he is familiar with the country and

the United Nations system. We look forward to the keen judgments and suggestions he will undoubtedly make, and I, personally, am pleased to leave UNAMA in such capable hands.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing. In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): I wish, first of all, to warmly thank Mr. Guéhenno for his clear and comprehensive briefing on the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2008/159). I also wish to acknowledge the participation and the presence in the Chamber of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Eide. We are pleased by the appointment of such a skilled and experienced diplomat to this challenging position. The higher the expectations — and they are very high — the stronger the support he will need when he embarks on this trip. I wish to assure Mr. Eide that he can count on us.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting in the broadest possible format. The long list of speakers before us bears witness to the keen interest of large sectors of the membership in this issue. It also shows how many friends Afghanistan can rely on in its quest for peace, stability and development. It is a privilege for us to have the opportunity to listen to our partners from all constituencies before embarking on the final stages of our work on the resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

We feel humbled by the responsibility to steer this process in the Council, but also feel that we have a guiding star role here. I think that this guiding star idea has been captured by the Secretary-General in paragraph 64 of the report when he writes,

"The guiding principle of UNAMA activities is to reinforce Afghan leadership and strengthen international cohesion in support of that leadership." (S/2008/159, para. 64)

It has to be clear for all of us that the strengthening of the leadership and the ownership of the Afghan Government is at stake. We will proceed by giving the utmost consideration to all the views that will be expressed during this debate. First of all, we have noted the Secretary-General's report and how Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has said very clearly that the mandate is appropriate and sufficiently broad and that it has to be sharpened. I think that we must do exactly that, keeping in mind the six areas highlighted in the Secretary-General's report.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I will only add a few complementary comments on the challenges that the Council is confronted with.

The main message that we can draw from the Secretary-General's report is that the international community needs to stay the course in Afghanistan, possibly with evolving modalities but certainly with unchanged determination. That is what our Afghan friends are asking for. The enemies of peace and stability have shown that they are ready to exploit any sign of weakness and fill all gaps that might be created. We pay tribute once again to the victims of all nationalities caused by the senseless violence that Afghanistan is enduring. Such a death toll can not be tolerated and must be stopped.

The mutual trust between Afghanistan and its partners is indispensable if we are to counter the opposition forces. The international community must trust the good faith of the Afghan authorities, and the Afghan authorities, on their part, must trust the genuine and unbiased commitment of its partners. Such background of trust must be maintained, even when it is felt by either side that mistakes are made. These misperceptions — because this is what it is all about; perceptions and misperceptions — cannot infringe on the commonality of our strategic goals; they can be corrected through dialogue and mutual understanding. The scary alternative would be the unravelling of our partnership and the success of our common enemies.

We remain convinced that the United Nations must continue to determinedly play its irreplaceable role as guarantor of our partnership and mutual trust. Our common commitment is nurtured by the legitimacy that only the United Nations can provide.

With this in mind, we cannot ask the United Nations to do more in terms of coordination, without a genuine commitment by every international actor to comply with the United Nations coordination role. It should also be clear that such an essential role must continue to go hand in hand with the continuous reinforcement, I repeat, of Afghan ownership and leadership in all sectors, ranging from security to the provision of services to the population. The Joint Coordinating and Monitoring Board (JCMB) embodies, as the Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has so appropriately emphasized, those guiding principles by its very nature and composition.

In our view, therefore, it should be further strengthened and enabled to fulfil its monitoring functions in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact. Such functions become all the more relevant as our common efforts to meet the benchmarks and timelines of the Compact face increasing challenges.

The report of the Secretary-General and today's briefing forcefully describe the nature of the challenges in the areas of security, governance, electoral preparation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, human rights protection, gender equality, humanitarian assistance and counter-narcotics. The European Union Presidency will address in detail our shared concerns in these areas.

I will simply add that, against this background, it is certainly appropriate to organize a high-level, midterm review of the implementation of the Compact, in order to refocus and reprioritize our efforts. We are therefore ready to offer our contribution to the preparation of the international conference that France has so aptly and kindly offered to host.

Similar events are instrumental in giving a fresh impetus to initiatives on the ground, as proven by the effective follow-up to last year's Rome Conference on Justice and Rule of Law in Afghanistan. We have noted with particular satisfaction, in this regard, the good news contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the launch of the National Justice Programme.

Finally, I would like to address the fundamental question of the contribution to be provided by the Security Council. Sometimes the developments on the ground appear to frustrate the requests and expectations expressed around this table, but this does not mean that the Council should shy away from fulfilling its role as enshrined in the Charter. It is our

responsibility to give focused and clear guidance to UNAMA for it is in this area we can indeed make a difference.

In this regard, we believe that the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, in paragraphs 63 and 64, offer a unique opportunity to provide such guidance. Given the wide-ranging nature of the mandate, we agree that there is a need to further build on the indications contained in resolution 1746 (2007) in order to identify a number of priority actions for the UNAMA, as we were saying before.

We are ready to work with Security Council members in order to translate into consensual language the well-advised recommendations of the Secretary-General, while carefully considering, at the same time, any additional suggestions. We are sure that the vision and the skills of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Eide, will be instrumental to effectively implement the refocused and prioritized mandate.

Let me also reiterate once again that UNAMA needs from the international community not only clear guidance, but also all the political support and the resources required to fulfil its challenging tasks.

We also believe that the resolution to be adopted should seriously address a number of horizontal issues included on the Council's agenda, namely, the protection of civilians, children in armed conflict and women, peace and security, all which are dramatically relevant in the case of Afghanistan. Our general discussions on these issues must be followed up when discussing country-specific mandates.

I will conclude by reiterating Italy's unwavering commitment to assist our Afghan friends, as long as requested, in their endeavour to enjoy peace, stability and development after decades of conflict. I believe that our continued contributions, contributions dating from 2001, along with the sacrifice of our troops, validate such commitment more eloquently than any words.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, let me thank Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for the briefing he has provided us this morning. We would also like to express our gratitude for the efforts by Mr. Tom Koenigs, former Head of the United Nations

Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), as well as his entire staff.

We are aware of the important role that UNAMA has played in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and that it why we would like to wish every success to Mr. Kai Eide in his new post as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the Mission.

Since the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan, the news that has reached us has not been very encouraging. This reflects the daunting challenge represented by the establishment of a viable and peaceful State in a country that, in recent decades, has only known war and intolerance.

However, we wonder if the growing obstacles that the international community is facing in Afghanistan are not the result of the lack of coordination and determination on the part of those who are in charge of assisting in its reconstruction. This could be making it difficult for them to tackle the roots of the conflict.

For example, we are disappointed to see that member States of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the organization in charge of security in Afghanistan, offer diverging strategies to stabilize the country. Decisions that prioritize swift results rather than long-term improvements, both in the institutional and security sectors, could be risky as they can undermine the attention and resources that are directed towards suppressing the insurgency.

Furthermore, unilaterally pushing for non-consensual policies does not help to generate coordinated strategies and also undermines the will of the people of Afghanistan to rebuild their country and to play an active role in this reconstruction. This lack of coordination and promotion of shared objectives represents a serious obstacle to multilateralism, which is the very foundation of our institution.

Lastly, we understand that, in order to bring more consistency to the efforts of the international community in Afghanistan, we need a more energetic leadership from UNAMA. The future of the country must, of course, be in the hands of the people of Afghanistan themselves, as was pointed out very clearly and accurately by the Ambassador of Italy, but UNAMA can and must assume a more proactive role in coordination efforts aimed at building and securing a viable State in Afghanistan.

Both the United Nations and the international forces must step up their efforts to improve cooperation mechanisms among themselves. They must also strengthen the able and responsible management of the Afghan leadership. For this reason, we support the extension of the UNAMA mandate until March 2009, with a greater and more energetic coordinating role for the United Nations in the efforts to rebuild the country and to improve its security situation.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing and presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan.

Let me, through you, Mr. President, welcome the presence of Mr. Kai Eide and congratulate him, on behalf of Belgium, on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and to pledge full support and confidence of my country as he fulfils this important role. Additionally, I am pleased to see at the Council table the presence of our colleague from Afghanistan.

In addition to the statement which will be made today by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union, to which my delegation fully subscribes, I would like to make the following comments on the central role of the United Nations in the comprehensive strategy in Afghanistan.

A little more than two years ago, Afghanistan and the international community concluded a five-year compact in London. The objectives defined at that time are still topical. Even though there still are challenges before us, on a positive note the international community remains strongly engaged in Afghanistan, as was emphasized by the Secretary-General in his report.

As in any partnership, each party, of course, bears its portion of responsibility.

The Government and the people of Afghanistan have a leading role to play; the international community, through its efforts, can only support and strengthen the elected regime. Within the framework of that partnership, the United Nations is prepared to respond to the recent appeals to assume a central role in coordinating international aid, and Belgium welcomes that. However, if it is to succeed, the Organization must be provided with the means and the space necessary to carry out that responsibility.

The cooperation between Afghanistan and the international community is even more essential in the light of the interconnected nature of the challenges facing Afghanistan. Succeeding in Afghanistan means improving the daily lives of Afghans and putting in place an institutional system that can maintain the progress made. Only a comprehensive approach and strategy will make that possible.

As we know, without security there can be no development, and without development security cannot be ensured. Unfortunately, the drug problem is an illustration of that. If we are to strengthen these two pillars of the Afghanistan Compact, namely, security and development, the third pillar — governance, the rule of law and human rights — will be just as crucial. Here, Afghans have a major responsibility. While progress has been made, particularly through the establishment of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance, much still needs to be done. Corruption remains a major problem undermining judicial, police and administration reform efforts, and progress with respect to human rights remains limited.

In all those areas, the United Nations can make the difference. That is why Belgium supports the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2008/159), particularly with regard to the role of coordinating the international community's efforts, support for efforts to improve governance at the local level and strengthened cooperation with the International Security Assistance Force. In that regard, Belgium welcomes the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in the international meeting on Afghanistan to be held in Bucharest on 3 April on the sidelines of the NATO Summit.

2008 should be another important stage in the process begun in Bonn in 2001 to ensure that Afghanistan will once again become a stable and prosperous State. In addition to finalizing and launching the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, important decisions must be swiftly taken for the upcoming presidential and legislative elections.

The international conference that France has offered to host in Paris in June should be an opportunity to assess progress made and to encourage everyone — the Afghan Government and the international community — to redouble efforts between now and then to ensure that the objectives set in London will be attained.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (spoke in Chinese):

The Chinese delegation would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing on Afghanistan. China also wishes to congratulate Mr. Kai Eide on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. We look forward to working closely with him and with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

China has noted with satisfaction that, with the support of the international community and of the United Nations, Afghanistan has made some progress in the area of national reconstruction and development. On the political front, the Afghan Government has established the Independent Directorate for Local Governance to monitor local administration and to combat corruption and illegal drugs. In the economic arena, the Afghan national economy has experienced stable growth and a steady rise in projected gross national product for four consecutive years. With regard to regional cooperation, the Afghan Government has worked together with other countries in the region to combat terrorism and to promote economic development and the return of refugees.

However, we must deal with one fact: Afghans continue to face many severe challenges, such as a deteriorating security situation and constant acts of violence and terrorism. All levels of Government in Afghanistan need to be greatly strengthened, particularly the security and justice sectors. The Afghan people continue to live in poverty, and the drug issue remains unresolved. Meeting those challenges will require further efforts by the Afghan Government and the international community. China attaches great importance to the problems facing Afghanistan, and we look forward to further improvements in the situation there.

Here, I should like to emphasize the following points. First, the achievement of security and stability in Afghanistan will require joint efforts by the security forces in Afghanistan, UNAMA and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). China appreciates the efforts being made by UNAMA and ISAF in that regard. We hope that the parties concerned, while carrying out military actions against terrorists, will strengthen their communication and cooperation with the Afghan security sector and UNAMA, so that each party will bring its own advantages and working

synergies fully to bear. The international community must invest additional resources to help Afghanistan further rebuild its military and police forces so that they can assume, independently and at an early date, the responsibility of maintaining national security and social stability.

Secondly, the keys to lasting peace in Afghanistan are economic development and improvement in the quality of life. Experience has shown that military actions cannot fully resolve all the problems facing Afghanistan. The international community must provide additional support to the Afghan Government, and efforts must be made to fully implement the Afghanistan Compact and the National Development Strategy so that all people in Afghanistan can enjoy the benefits of development and regain their confidence in the country's future. China appreciates all the efforts made by the countries neighbouring Afghanistan to promote economic development.

Thirdly, in its efforts, UNAMA must continue to be guided by the principle of fairness and neutrality and must play a central coordinating role. China supports an extension of UNAMA's mandate and a greater role by UNAMA in coordinating international support for Afghanistan. Here, it should be pointed out that UNAMA, while working with the relevant international organizations, must abide strictly by its mandate and consistently maintain a position of fairness and neutrality. While coordinating the multifaceted international assistance to Afghanistan, UNAMA must remind donors of the need to respect the will of the Government and the people of Afghanistan. As for the issue of domestic reconciliation, UNAMA can provide constructive support at the request of the Afghan Government, but it cannot make decisions for the Government.

As a friendly country neighbouring Afghanistan, China has attached great importance to development in the country. We have great sympathy for the sufferings of the Afghan people. We sincerely hope that, with strong support from the international community, Afghans will be able to restore security and stability and achieve development and prosperity at an early date. China will, to the best of its ability, to continue to provide support to Afghanistan.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Permit me to begin by drawing the Council's attention to the presence of a delegation of six British Members of

Parliament from the House of Commons who are here on an official visit to the United Nations, at the side of the Chamber.

I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing, which, as always, was very full and informative. I also wish to thank Acting Special Representative Asplund for his leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) since the beginning of the year and to pay a particularly warm welcome to Ambassador Kai Eide and to congratulate him on his appointment. We look forward to working very closely with him in the months ahead.

The United Nations is at the heart of the international effort in Afghanistan, and as head of UNAMA, Mr. Eide is going to play a crucial role in coordinating the overall international effort in Afghanistan. We welcome the Secretary-General's willingness to see UNAMA assume an even greater role in that coordination process. That is something we and others have been advocating for some time, and we recognize that those calling for greater coordination must themselves be willing to be coordinated.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative of convening today's debate. One of the remarkable things about Afghanistan is the number of countries and organizations involved in the international effort there. Another remarkable aspect is the degree of common thinking and common purpose among those countries and organizations. Events such as today's are an important reminder of the breadth of that international engagement and the extent of the common support for the Government of Afghanistan. I warmly welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan at today's debate.

We welcome the Secretary-General's latest report on and we recognize the picture it paints: a country that has made great strides since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, but that continues to face significant challenges — some of which are unique to Afghanistan, some of which are common to other post-conflict democracies. The international community has no choice but to continue to support Afghanistan in overcoming those challenges.

One of the tasks of the international community, led by the United Nations, is to bring together the various strands of activity — military, political,

development and economic — in a comprehensive approach in support of the Afghanistan Government. We are all aware that there is no purely military solution to Afghanistan's current challenges. Success depends upon marshalling all our resources in support of a common objective.

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's call for closer civilian-military cooperation. The United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) share the same objectives in Afghanistan, and it is important they work together to deliver them. The NATO summit to be held in Bucharest next month is an opportunity to look at the totality of NATO contributions in Afghanistan and the way in which those efforts can best contribute to our overall objective. We welcome the announcement by the Secretary-General yesterday that he and President Karzai will both be present for a special meeting to discuss Afghanistan in Bucharest.

We also look forward to further expansion of the UNAMA presence in Afghanistan, including into the south. The greater the reach of UNAMA and the better its understanding of the dynamics in different parts of Afghanistan, the more it can deliver on its mandate and play the leadership role we all want to see.

Supporting a comprehensive approach also means supporting Afghan efforts to bring disaffected Afghans into society's mainstream, provided they renounce violence and accept Afghanistan's Constitution. We agree with the Secretary-General that UNAMA has an important role to play in supporting Afghan-led reconciliation activities in whatever ways the Government of Afghanistan considers appropriate.

The overall framework for our work in Afghanistan remains the Afghanistan Compact, signed in London in January 2006. That agreement constitutes the international community's commitment to Afghanistan. It also sets out what we, the international community, expect of the Government of Afghanistan. We should remember that this is an Afghan-led process, and that progress is measured by the ability of the Afghan Government to take the lead in key areas. I know that is also how the Afghan Government judges success and is what all their efforts are aimed at.

The process will take time. We are already seeing the Afghan National Security Forces increasingly take the lead in security operations, with international forces in support. It is clear that the next presidential

and parliamentary elections should be Afghan-led and Afghan-administered, with the support, including financial, of the international community and the United Nations.

We also look forward to an increasingly proactive Afghan lead in counter-narcotics. The agreement reached in Tokyo on a prioritized implementation plan for the National Drug Control Strategy is an important step forward, with its aggressive eradication targets and commitment to provision of proper force protection. We also hope to see continued government efforts to improve local governance, which is so crucial to the counter-narcotics drive, including through the work of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

On the development side, we look forward to the finalization and launch of the Afghan National Development Strategy. That will be an important step in increasing Afghan ownership of the development effort, including the difficult process of identifying a realistic number of priority areas for that effort to focus on. The Paris conference to be held in June this year will be an important opportunity to review progress in implementing both the Development Strategy and the Compact more generally.

No one, and certainly not the United Kingdom, underestimates the challenges we face in Afghanistan. But we recognize what is at stake in Afghanistan, and that is why we have committed our military, financial and political support since 2001 and have stepped it up markedly over the past two years.

We are optimistic. We know that the people of Afghanistan and their Government want what people everywhere want: the chance to live peaceful, prosperous lives. That is a far more powerful vision than the violence and hatred offered by the enemies of democracy in Afghanistan. We are confident that, with our support, it is the vision of peace and prosperity that will win out.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for having presented the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan. We would also like to welcome here Mr. Kai Eide, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and we would like to encourage him in the new responsibilities that he has taken on.

The report highlights that despite the weakness of the political and socioeconomic institutions, which is clear, the trend is towards an improvement in the political process and the economic situation. With regard to the political aspect, the upcoming presidential elections that the Afghan authorities plan to organize will certainly be a decisive test in entrenching democracy in the country, as long as the executive and legislative powers manage to reach a consensus as quickly as possible on the draft electoral law, currently being reviewed in the national assembly, and on other practical modalities such as the census and the drawing up of voter lists. The regional environment should also help to contribute to the normalization of the political situation.

In the economic sphere, the diligent finalization of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy has become a priority in order to allow the Government to take on the fight against poverty and, more generally, the question of development. From that point of view, the generous offer made by the French authorities to host a conference in Paris for the support, launching and financing of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy should be welcomed.

All of those encouraging facts, which are to the credit of the Afghan authorities, would obviously be more productive if the security context were more conducive to that end. Unfortunately, there are serious obstacles preventing that progress. As the report points out, there has been, first of all, a rise in terrorist activities, in particular suicide attacks and the use of explosive devices against the civilian population, politicians, convoys and humanitarian workers. There is also the scourge of drugs, which constitutes the main source of funds for terrorist groups and is consequently linked to the rise in terrorist activities, and there is the scourge of organized corruption. The Security Council must therefore welcome and support the establishment of the National Drug Control Strategy.

We must add to the list of elements undermining the development and stability of Afghanistan the inability of the Afghan forces to respond effectively to these threats, due to a lack of troops and adequate resources. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the International Security Assistance Force must therefore provide effective support to the Afghan forces, particularly in terms of professional and operational supervision. That would help them to maintain a balance between law and order

and the fight against the insurgency, especially since it is true that security and stability are crucial to establishing and guaranteeing the rule of law. In order to enable UNAMA to continue to play its decisive role, we favour the extension of its mandate.

The Government is still unable to administer justice. Summary executions and the stripping of fundamental freedoms remain common, and we must therefore strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Justice. We believe that the outcome of the July 2007 Rome Conference on the Rule of Law in Afghanistan will be of assistance in that regard.

These are all challenges that must be faced, and the international community must continue to provide cooperation and assistance to the Afghan authorities, in particular as regards implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, signed in London. Clearly, we reaffirm our full support for the recommendations that the Secretary-General has made with a view to achieving a permanent solution to the Afghan problem.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this important open debate. At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and for his introduction of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/159). I would like also to extend to Mr. Kai Eide our warmest congratulations on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

In his report, the Secretary-General says that two years after the adoption of the Afghanistan Compact the political transition continues to face serious challenges. We are deeply concerned over the current security situation in Afghanistan, where, as reported by the Secretary-General, in 2007 alone there were 8,000 conflict-related fatalities, of which 1,500 were civilians. We condemn all acts of violence aimed at destabilizing the country, in particular those targeting innocent civilians, including the terrorist attack that took place on 17 February near Kandahar, which killed over 100 people.

The difficulties and challenges that Afghanistan is facing today are not only those of a security nature. In reaffirming our support for the efforts of the Government and the people of Afghanistan aimed at stabilizing and rebuilding the country, and given the

specific situation in Afghanistan, which has gone through long decades of internal conflict and division, it is our view that besides measures to enhance security, the need to promote national reconciliation and a political process aimed at ensuring lasting Afghan and regional peace and stability should be duly recognized. Because of all the suffering they have endured and because of their earnest aspiration to move forward, the people of Afghanistan deserve the continued support and assistance of the international community in their cause of national rebuilding, the success of which depends on success against both major enemies: terrorism and drugs.

In that connection, we find it worrisome that Afghanistan remains one of the largest suppliers of cannabis in the world. While agreeing that there is an urgent need to strengthen enforcement activities aimed at eradicating and interdicting illicit drug trafficking and at dismantling production facilities, we believe that it is vital to address the pervasive poverty which is the root cause of this situation. Parallel to enforcement measures, in-depth action-oriented study is needed to come up with initiatives on building alternative livelihoods for the people so that they can enjoy a better life without engaging in drug-related activities.

While commending UNAMA for its work in Afghanistan and while supporting the Secretary-General's recommendation that the current mandate of UNAMA be extended for a further 12 months, we are of the opinion that, in the context of the complex security situation still prevailing in Afghanistan, UNAMA should focus on carrying out its present mandate, although I agree with Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno that the mandate should be sharpened. We support UNAMA in its willingness to play a role in supporting the electoral process by providing technical assistance and channelling international funds earmarked to support Afghan electoral institutions. However, this must be at the request of the Government of Afghanistan, in accordance with the principle of respect for the independence and sovereignty of the country.

With the people of Afghanistan, we share a special bond of traditional friendship. We have always followed with keen interest and concern the situation in Afghanistan. Viet Nam has participated in the international conferences on the reconstruction of Afghanistan. With our limited resources, we have extended to the people of Afghanistan our modest

assistance. With our post-war reconstruction experience, we are ready to join Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts, bilaterally and in tripartite frameworks with the participation of donor countries and the Afghan Government.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica would have preferred to speak after hearing the statement of the representative of Afghanistan; in our view, hearing from the country that is the subject of this morning's debate would have been most valuable. For that reason, our statement will not include comments on or reactions to his statement, as we would have wished.

I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing this morning and welcome the recent appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Our thanks go to Mr. Tom Koenigs for his endeavours during his two years in that post.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this debate on the situation in Afghanistan. The deterioration in the security situation and in the fight against the drug industry, as well as the perhaps insufficient progress in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, call for this new consideration of what action is needed and of the international community's commitment to support that action.

For more than six years the United Nations has been striving to ensure that Afghanistan would discard the perverse logic of war, build representative and inclusive political institutions and firmly embark on the path of economic growth and social development. But we see clear disturbing signs that the road ahead is strewn with obstacles. First of all, the most recent of the rather frequent unrest and disturbances reveal problems regarding the building of legitimate democratic institutions. To that, we must add a climate of growing insecurity, as seen in the more than 180 terrorist attacks that took place in 2007 and in the nearly 30 that have occurred so far this year. This situation clearly undermines efforts to succeed in the physical and social reconstruction of the country. I cannot fail to mention the cultivation, production and trafficking of opium, which compromise the security, development and governance of Afghanistan.

Only a sustained international effort can prevent difficult days ahead for Afghanistan, and that will not

be easy. Compliance with the objectives of the Afghanistan Compact is the primary responsibility of the Afghan Government, but also requires the unconditional support of the international community. We therefore agree with the Secretary-General when he writes in his report that

"To meet the security challenge and stabilize Afghanistan, a common approach is needed that integrates security, governance, rule of law, human rights and social and economic development." (S/2008/159, para. 66)

That is why Costa Rica attaches particular importance to the role to be played by UNAMA in assisting the Afghan Government with respect to security sector reform. The construction of the State depends largely on the strength of the institutions involved in that sector. We further understand that the strengthening of the Government will depend largely on the trust it is able to inspire in its citizens. We therefore welcome the measures being taken to address corruption. We stress the need to invest further in activities linked to development, in particular at the local level. Only thus can we strengthen the system to meet the noble objectives enshrined in the Afghanistan Compact.

I wish to conclude by referring to the third component of the Compact — governance, and in particular human rights. The reports submitted to the international community of persons being condemned to death for exercising their right to free expression, as well as of torture and arbitrary detention, are a source of deep concern to us. For Costa Rica, the fundamental role that a human-rights based approach plays in the promotion of stability and development is clear. No sustainable security, responsible governance or full development can be built on the bases of abuse and intolerance.

We understand that UNAMA's mandate is sufficiently comprehensive and suited to help the Government of Afghanistan to meet its obligations in that area, and we expect the Government to make an effective commitment to promoting action in that respect.

Mr. Ettalhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I, too, wish to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his most informative briefing this morning. I also wish to thank the United Nations

Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for its efforts, in particular in rebuilding the country.

We also welcome Special Representative of the Secretary-General Eide, whom we congratulate on his appointment as Head of UNAMA.

I further welcome the Ambassador of Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/159) paints a bleak picture of the situation in Afghanistan. The principal causes it cites in that respect are renewed insurgent activities, the fragility of State institutions and their incapacity to promote socio-economic development to meet the basic needs of the people of Afghanistan.

The report also stresses the link between security and reconstruction. It notes in paragraph 31 that "[c]ultivation remains concentrated ... in the insurgency-affected provinces", which leads us simply to reiterate that the situation requires a comprehensive solution, and not an exclusively military one. I believe that we are all mindful of that.

The international community's fundamental goal in Afghanistan is to help the Afghan people to establish a stable democratic State, and not to wage war against the Taliban or other armed groups. The fight against those entities is not an objective, and the use of force alone can never ensure the State's control over its territory or assist it in reaching its development goals. Moreover, stability requires a parallel effort of dialogue to reconcile the country with all actors of Afghan society. The Afghanistan legislature has called on President Karzai to consider reconciliation with the anti-Government rebels and to strengthen the army and the police, in parallel with the adoption of measures for development.

Security is a precondition for development, but maintaining peace also requires socio-economic conditions that will meet the minimum basic needs of the people of Afghanistan. The solution lies in fighting not only the insurgents, but also the climate that fosters fundamentalism and extremism. In other words, we must build schools, provide medical care, and strengthen infrastructure. The Secretary-General stresses that connection when he writes in his report that

"[p]rovinces not affected by anti-Government violence have demonstrated an increasing

capacity for delivering governance and economic development" (*ibid.*, para. 11).

The report also notes in paragraph 29 that "counter-narcotics efforts have gained significant momentum", although in paragraph 31 it says that "opium-poppy cultivation is not expected to change significantly" in 2008 and that it is "likely to increase ... in the insurgency-affected provinces". While we appreciate those counter-narcotics efforts, we would emphasize once again that their success will be ensured only with the improved capacity to provide decent and legitimate employment to all Afghans.

I shall be brief. We appreciate the progress made in the dismantling of illegal armed groups and in the Government's efforts to ensure good governance at the national level through the establishment of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance, as well as the measures taken to combat endemic corruption in the country. We especially welcome the Government's efforts to develop the National Development Strategy and to make progress in that regard, as mentioned in paragraph 53 of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/159). My country supports the observations of the Secretary-General as regards the importance of the Strategy. Development is a vital part of the Mission's work and is crucial to ensuring the success of the efforts currently being made in Afghanistan.

Finally, my country also supports the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and to strengthen its role in the coordination of international efforts to ensure that the necessary funds are secured for the Mission to open regional offices and carry out good-governance efforts.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We join others in congratulating Mr. Kai Eide of Norway on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We are confident that under his leadership the United Nations will continue to intensify its leading role in coordinating the efforts of the international community in support of the Government of Afghanistan.

We also wish to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for presenting the latest report (S/2008/159) of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has made some strides in the past few years, but it continues to face serious challenges. The Secretary-General's report describes the current state of affairs in the country in all its complexity. The serious challenges facing Afghanistan, which are detailed in the latest report of the Secretary-General, should not be underestimated. Among other things, those challenges include the high level of insurgent and terrorist activities, the alarming increase in the cultivation and production of opium, the widespread problem of corruption and the slow pace of social and economic development.

We believe that the process that began with the Bonn Agreement, and which is continuing under the Afghanistan Compact, is largely on track and should further be improved. In that regard, South Africa is pleased that the Secretary-General acknowledges in his report the continuing engagement of the international community in Afghanistan. For our part, we support a common approach that will integrate security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development in the country. We also call for full respect for human rights in Afghanistan.

The persistent threat to security posed by insurgent and terrorist activities is the main challenge to Afghanistan's nation-building efforts and stability. Paragraph 19 of the Secretary-General's report clearly illustrates the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, especially in recent months. In that context, we deplore any attempts to destabilize the country, in particular terrorist attacks on innocent civilians and children.

The report of the Secretary-General once again mentions the challenges associated with the narcotics issue in Afghanistan. While the country continues to face the problem of narcotics, we are pleased that counter-narcotics efforts have gained significant momentum since the last report. We applaud the Government of Afghanistan, supported by its international partners — in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for reaching agreement on priority actions to be taken on counter-narcotics efforts. We encourage them to fully implement the National Drug Control Strategy and to strengthen enforcement activities. We further encourage the Government of Afghanistan to improve its institutional capacity for service delivery and development in support of viable alternatives to poppy cultivation.

South Africa reaffirms its support for the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, under the ownership of the Afghan people. We also commend the central role played by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Afghan Compact.

We would like to stress the importance of regional cooperation as an effective means to promote security, governance and development in Afghanistan. In that context, my delegation welcomes the improved relations between Afghanistan and its neighbours, in particular Pakistan. We commend the resolve both countries have expressed to combat extremism and terrorism by further improving existing mechanisms for the exchange of information.

In conclusion, South Africa supports the central and impartial role of UNAMA and its activities in leading the efforts of the international community. We support the need to strengthen UNAMA's coordination capacity to enable the Mission to make a significant difference on the ground. We call upon UNAMA to support the Government of Afghanistan in its preparations for the upcoming elections, to be held next year.

We commend the Italian delegation on its good work as a lead nation on the issue of Afghanistan, and for preparing the draft resolution on the mandate of UNAMA. For our part, we will constructively work with our partners during the discussions on UNAMA's mandate renewal.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): I want to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. I should also like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to thank the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) — in particular former Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tom Koenigs and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bo Asplund — for their dedication to the cause of Afghanistan's success. We also thank them for the timely and sound input they provided to the Secretary-General in producing a frank and comprehensive report (S/2008/159). My Government concurs with the central judgement of that report, which presents a balanced account of both the progress that has been achieved and the challenges confronting Afghanistan.

The success of Afghanistan is a vital interest of the international community. Success in Afghanistan will contribute not only to the improvement of the lives of 30 million people, who have suffered terribly as the result of 25 years of occupation and war; it will also be a keystone in the effort to defeat terrorism, to weaken extremism, to create regional stability in Central and South Asia, to advance the needed political and economic transformation of the broader Middle East and to reduce the threat of narcotics from Afghanistan.

As we look ahead, Afghan leaders, regional Powers and the international community all have important responsibilities if Afghanistan is to fully succeed. However, I would like to focus on the actions needed on the part of the United Nations.

The United Nations should be proud of the role it has played in Afghanistan, starting with the Bonn process. The United States welcomes the appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We thank him for taking that important and challenging job. He can count on our support, and we promise to work closely with him. His appointment opens a new chapter in United Nations engagement in Afghanistan. His role will be vital in advancing the kind of productive partnership with President Karzai and the Afghan Government that is the foundation for all, meaningful progress. Afghans have governed their country for millennia. Our task is not to do this work for them, but to enable their country to stand on its own feet as soon as possible.

As we discuss the renewal of the UNAMA mandate, the focus should be on setting the right priorities. At the top of the agenda is empowering Special Representative Eide to coordinate and integrate more effectively the support of the international community, which is composed of dozens of donors, agencies and implementers. One of the greatest assets for Afghanistan is the sheer number of countries involved, on both the military and the civilian sides. The inevitable resulting challenge is ensuring that sufficient coordination exists to get the most out of the individual efforts.

First, Special Representative Eide will need to ensure that civilian assistance is integrated in support of the Afghan people and Government and of efforts to stabilize the country. While the question of integrating

NATO-International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military efforts will be dealt with during the upcoming summit in Bucharest, success against the insurgency requires a comprehensive campaign plan that ensures that military action to clear areas of the enemy is coordinated with civilian efforts to establish good governance and economic development.

Secondly, Special Representative Eide should better coordinate the efforts of the international community to ensure a shared and focused commitment to the Afghan National Development Strategy and the Afghanistan Compact. The execution of the elements of the Compact has been uneven, and Special Representative Eide should catalyse improved results where needed. This will entail greater coordination both among donors and between the Afghan Government and donors. This is particularly needed to increase the capacity of Afghan ministries to provide basic services and to tackle the problem of corruption.

Thirdly, Special Representative Eide should work to bolster international support for Afghanistan. Among the leaders — as well as the publics — of key donor countries there is an inadequate understanding of the achievements and challenges of Afghanistan. The upcoming Paris conference of donors will be an important opportunity to rally such support. Explaining all aspects of the current situation, Special Representative Eide can enable friends of Afghanistan to appreciate the return on the investment to date and to focus future commitment on the most important challenges and opportunities.

Fourthly, Special Representative Eide should use his good offices to promote reconciliation and accountability, in close coordination with the Afghan Government, based on the acceptance of the Afghan constitution. In addition, Special Representative Eide should engage in active diplomacy to create a regional environment conducive to the stabilization of Afghanistan. In the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, regional Powers came together, despite their differences, to support the Bonn process, which enabled Afghans to freely choose their own Government. Reclaiming the spirit of Bonn is in the interest of all these countries. It should be a key priority for the United Nations effort.

To carry out this mission, UNAMA must have the right people in Afghanistan, as well as sufficiently robust funding and security assets. We regret that, as

noted in the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/159), UNAMA faces vacancy rate and staff retention issues. The United Nations must incentivize its best people to create an effective presence, particularly in parts of the country where NATO-ISAF is achieving stability but needs a partner to help to improve governance and development. It is not just a matter of filling the slots, but rather one of getting highly motivated and capable people with the right skills.

The United States is also ready to do its part to help Afghanistan succeed. In addition to the 27,500 troops already deployed to support Afghanistan, the United States will send an additional 3,200 marines, 2,200 of them dedicated to the strengthening of security in the south and 1,000 to training Afghan national security forces. In 2008, the United States will provide over \$2.9 billion in total assistance, including \$1 billion for education, health, agriculture, infrastructure and local reconstruction. In addition, we have asked Congress for \$2.6 billion in a 2008 supplemental funding request. We are also undertaking a number of new initiatives, including the establishment of a public-private partnership with American law firms and schools to help advance the rule of law and establish a strong core of legal professionals.

The Council should fully support UNAMA and its team as they pursue all these avenues. We look forward in the coming days to working with the Government of Afghanistan, the Security Council and other key countries to ensure that UNAMA can better address Afghanistan's current needs and priorities.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I wish to begin by expressing our appreciation to Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for presenting the latest report of the Secretary-General on developments in Afghanistan (S/2008/159).

I would also like to congratulate Mr. Kai Eide on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. My delegation also commends Mr. Tom Koenigs, who completed his assignment in December 2007, for his hard work and his contribution to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

In the past few years, Afghanistan has made notable achievements in various sectors. Representative political institutions have steadily been taking root, and economic

development has been progressing. Yet, my delegation is concerned over the increasing activities of the insurgency, which are affecting those achievements in a harmful way. Most perturbing are the increase of concerted insurgency in the south and east of Afghanistan and attacks against local and humanitarian workers. Those violent attacks risk undermining the current efforts by the Afghan Government to achieve peace and stability in the country. The attacks have also prevented access by the Government and aid organizations to some districts.

Indonesia welcomes the commitment of the Afghan Government to address the security challenges as a priority. We recognize the increasing need for capacity-building efforts for the Afghan National Army. We acknowledge the importance of the measures taken by the Afghan National Army, in collaboration with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), in responding to insurgency activities. My delegation also attaches great importance to respect for the principles of international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law, as well as the safety and security of civilians when security matters are addressed through military measures.

Indonesia also believes that a military approach alone cannot fully address the root causes of the current security challenges in Afghanistan. We therefore underline the importance of political dialogue and reconciliation involving all factions in Afghanistan, within the framework of the Afghan constitution. Like the Secretary-General, we too see the merit of a common approach to meet the security challenges and to stabilize Afghanistan, an approach which integrates security, governance, rule of law, human rights and social and economic development.

Addressing the drug economy is also an urgent matter, as it is particularly linked to sustaining the insurgency. In this regard, we welcome the fact that the counter-narcotics regime has gained momentum and that the prioritized implementation plan for the Government's National Drug Control Strategy has been endorsed.

In the political area, we are aware of continued efforts to harmonize views between the legislative and executive branches of the Afghan Government. More specifically, the 2009 and 2010 presidential and parliamentary elections will open a new chapter in Afghanistan's democratic transition. We welcome, in

that regard, the Government's approval in November 2007 of a draft electoral law, which is being reviewed by the National Assembly. We also attach particular importance to the participation of all Afghan political stakeholders in providing views on such critical issues as the electoral system.

Regional cooperation continues to be pertinent to the strengthening of Afghanistan's engagement in regional dynamics and of its capacity to address transnational challenges. Indonesia, therefore, welcomes the hosting by the Afghan Government of the seventeenth meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization in Herat. The Kabul Declaration on Promoting Regional Electricity Cooperation between Central and South Asia is a landmark achievement in Afghanistan's regional diplomacy. We also welcome bilateral partnerships between Afghanistan and neighbouring States in finding mutually acceptable solutions to, among other issues, the challenge of Afghan refugees.

We believe that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) remains critical to Afghanistan. UNAMA's support in achieving the country's national goals will continue to be needed. As the political elements of the Bonn process have been formally completed, UNAMA's role will continue to be important in assisting Afghanistan to execute various activities on other pillars of the Bonn Agreement.

In this regard, we concur with the assessment of the Secretary-General on the importance of enhanced coordination, political outreach, support for subnational governance, humanitarian coordination, electoral assistance and strengthened cooperation with ISAF as points of emphasis for UNAMA's programme of work in the months ahead.

Considering the continued importance of UNAMA in supporting the Afghanistan Government in achieving its national goals and the daunting challenges it continues to face, Indonesia supports the Secretary-General's proposal for the extension of the mandate of UNAMA for a further 12 months.

Finally, our appreciation goes to Mr. Bo Asplund, who served as Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and to all UNAMA personnel for their dedication and tireless efforts in the discharge of their important responsibilities.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): The Permanent Representative of Slovenia will soon deliver a statement on behalf of the European Union, with which France fully associates itself. I would now like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

First of all, like previous speakers, I would like to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing and to welcome the presence of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Kai Eide, to whom we address our warmest congratulations on his appointment. Like his predecessors, Mr. Kai Eide can rely on the full and active support of France in the vital mission that he must carry out on the ground. We note with satisfaction that his appointment enjoys broad international consensus and that the Afghan authorities have expressed their wish to work closely with him. He thus has all the authority he needs to carry out his essential role of coordination.

Six years after the fall of the regime which made Afghanistan a haven for international terrorism, we find ourselves at a crucial moment. The military situation has been stabilized, but it remains difficult. It is not yet led to decisive weakening of an adversary that does not hesitate to use terror, as we were tragically reminded by this morning's attack on the Canadian contingent in Kandahar.

The development of drug trafficking, which is closely related to the development of insurrection, is a particularly disturbing phenomenon. Its eradication through determined and sustained action must remain a priority for the Afghan authorities as well as for the international community. First and foremost the Afghan State authorities has yet to establish the rule of law in many regions of the country and to ensure that it is respected, and the problem of governance remains critical, in particular at the local level; this weakens the undeniable progress that has been achieved since 2001. The years to come will be decisive in this respect, especially with regard to the elections planned for 2009 and 2010. These are steps that the international community must help the Afghans successfully take.

In our view, we must address four key challenges in order to move forward in restoring Afghanistan and in fulfilling the objectives defined in London in 2006.

First of all, the international community must confirm its long-term commitment in order to persuade the Afghans that nothing will undermine our

determination to bring an end to attacks by those — terrorists, drug-traffickers and illegal armed groups — who hope to see our withdrawal. The peace and security both of Afghanistan and of the entire world depends on this. To be effective, this mobilization of the international community, which has already led to commitment of considerable resources and to substantial results, requires greater coordination among all the players. As has already been stated, Mr. Kai Eide's endeavours should make a major contribution to this.

The civilian and military commitment should be part of a greater context — and this too has been said by previous speakers — to enable the Afghans to decide their own future and to live in peace in their country. The gradual transfer of responsibilities to the Afghans must be our ongoing objective. This is especially important in the security sphere; beginning with Kabul, training efforts must be strengthened to that end.

Finally, we must consolidate the comprehensive strategy drawn up at the London Conference in January 2006. In that spirit, France, at the request of President Karzai, will organize in June 2008 a conference in support of Afghanistan. It will aim to publicize the achievements of six years of joint efforts, to reaffirm the international commitment and to establish a road map for the years to come. It will, in particular, take stock of the London Compact and will enable us to refocus the London strategy around realistic priority objectives. Of course we want to closely associate the United Nations with the conference, in particular the Secretary-General and his Special Representative.

Afghanistan is a priority for France and for the European Union. The President of the French Republic reaffirmed our long-term commitment during his visit to Afghanistan last December, both as regards civilian reconstruction assistance and as regards security, through our participation in the International Security Assistance Force and our support for the training of the Afghan police and army.

We see this bilateral and European commitment as part of a close partnership at all levels with the United Nations. Only the United Nations has the legitimacy, the impartiality and the expertise which are necessary for the development of a comprehensive approach to consolidating the democratic process in support of action by the Afghan authorities.

It is in that spirit that we support the extension of the mandate of UNAMA, along the lines set out by the Secretary-General in his report, including strengthened authority for the Special Representative, a sharpened mandate focused on a few priorities for action, and a strengthened presence on the ground in close coordination with other actors. UNAMA will thus be in a position to more effectively carry out its main role of restoring Afghanistan in order to bring to its population the freedom, security and prosperity which, like every other people in the world, it deserves.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): We thank the Secretary-General for his thorough and comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2008/159), and we welcome the observations and conclusions contained therein. We would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing.

We have noted with satisfaction the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Kai Eide of Norway as his Special Representative for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We are confident that, with his excellent background on security issues and his much-needed experience and diplomatic skills, Mr. Eide will successfully accomplish the mission entrusted to him.

In recent years, since the fall of the Taliban, the Government of Afghanistan and the international community have together taken some significant steps in improving the political, social and economic plight of Afghans. Conversely, and despite significant increases in the number of foreign troops and in the amount of aid provided to Afghanistan, violence, insecurity and opium production have risen dramatically. The international community must stand united in support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan and must, together with them, confront the challenges and threats facing the country. Genuine security remains the fundamental prerequisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan.

As far as security is concerned, the main role undoubtedly belongs to the military and the police. In our view, the capacity of the Afghan national security forces to guarantee security in their own country is of the utmost importance in that regard. Therefore, enhancing that capacity should be our first and most urgent task.

At the same time, it is important to underline that security cannot be provided by military means alone.

The military clearly has its place in such efforts, but, at the same time, we must be aware of its limits. We would like to see more civilian experts engaged on the ground. Good governance and the rule of law, as well as economic reconstruction and social development, all play important roles in the efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. We must support the efforts of the Afghan Government to deliver services to its citizens. In our view, that is a truly decisive element that will, over time, build the people's confidence in the Government.

Of particular importance in that connection are the strong support provided by the international community to the Afghan Government and mutual respect for the principles of aid effectiveness as expressed in the vision set out in the Afghanistan Compact. That important agreement should be thoroughly implemented and should become the main promoter of the Government's policies at the provincial and local levels. Croatia welcomes the announcement of preparations for an international conference to be held in Paris to review progress in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, as well as to discuss the way ahead.

Afghan ownership is crucial for the ultimate success of all peace efforts. We expect that there will be great interest in the finalization of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy as a result of the open public policy dialogue undertaken in Afghanistan on the most important security, economic and development issues. We are also confident that coordinated and effective implementation of the National Development Strategy will lead to substantive improvements in the daily lives of most Afghans.

The rule of law and improving the current state of affairs in the judicial sector are also of great importance, and we support all activities pursuant to the outcomes of the 2007 Rome Conference. However, owing to the fact that the majority of cases still go through traditional dispute settlement mechanisms, Croatia believes that serious consideration should be given to looking at ways to include human rights principles in those mechanisms as well. We believe that attention should be paid to the findings of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, because it is precisely the concept of human rights that should be the foundation for a stable and functioning political system. In that context, particular attention should be accorded to improving the status of women and children and improving respect for their rights.

Croatia agrees with the view of the Secretary-General that civilian-military cooperation is truly indispensable if we are to overcome the existing challenges. To that end, my Government would like to stress the importance of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. As a practical form of civilian-military partnership, these relatively small teams deployed in Afghan provinces should be considered an innovative form of crisis management unit designed to achieve synergy in the joint activities of the two components. That is why we believe that they should be fully supported in their activities and that this concept should be further developed on the basis of the lessons learned since its establishment. In that regard, UNAMA could assume a greater coordinating role in relation to international assistance programmes.

We believe that the promotion of Afghan-led reconciliation programmes, under the vigilant control of the Afghan Government, is a particularly important factor in the attempts to pacify the security situation in the country. It bears repeating that a dialogue to that end should take place exclusively within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and with full respect for the sanctions regime established by the Security Council, particularly through its resolution 1267 (1999). National reconciliation would facilitate the cooperation of various groups throughout the country with the central Government and would, we hope, lead to the pacification of the country and to regional stabilization.

As expressly stated in the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/159), the drug-related economy represents a fundamental threat to political, economic and social institutions in Afghanistan. There are clear and growing links between the drug-related economy and the insurgency, which has been financed largely from that source. Moreover, the drug-related economy in Afghanistan is a serious regional and international problem, since Afghanistan is the largest producer of opium in the world.

Accordingly, we place high hopes in effective implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy, particularly at the local level, in order to achieve a sustained and significant reduction in the production and trafficking of narcotics, leading to their complete elimination. Afghan farmers should be strongly encouraged to eradicate poppy production and should be given assistance so that they can pursue alternative livelihoods.

Croatia also believes that regional and international cooperation is essential in the fight against the illicit trafficking of drugs, including through border management cooperation in the area of drug control and through contributions to the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund. It is clear that a certain number of high officials benefit from this trade and that the drug-related economy generates widespread corruption. Bearing that in mind, we urge the Afghan Government to implement the national anti-corruption strategy and to curb this silent destroyer.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

We thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and for presenting the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/159).

I shall be direct: we are seriously concerned at the constant increase in terrorist activity on the part of the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremists. Their activities undermine the fragile foundations of Afghan statehood and hinder comprehensive implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We are particularly alarmed that terrorists are, in effect, controlling an entire group of regions on whose territories parallel governments have been established. Now, more than ever before, it is important that, through joint efforts, the Afghan security forces and the international military presences reverse the negative security situation, which is hampering the consolidation of peace and democratic development in Afghanistan.

The dynamic of the military and political situation confirms the conclusion, expressed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his report, that the national reconciliation process must be carried out with full respect for the anti-Taliban sanctions regime established by the Security Council through its resolution 1267 (1999). One thing is clear: a return to civilian life is possible only for those who are innocent of war crimes. Any attempt to cosy up to extremists and to gradually invest them with power can only risk further destabilization. That is the principle that should guide the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as it carries out its mandate.

Unless we cut off the financial sources of terrorist subversion — the major source of which remains drug trafficking — we will not be able to cool its intensity.

We support the view of the Secretary-General that, in the interest of effectively combating the Afghan drug threat, it is essential to focus efforts on destroying not only drug crops, but also underground laboratories, and to take more vigorous action to intercept drugs in transit. Moreover, the ongoing inability of the Afghan Government, despite the assistance of the international community, to curb the drug threat is obvious proof of the relevance of the Russian Federation's initiative on establishing, with the United Nations in a coordinating role and with the participation of neighbouring States, a comprehensive system of counter-narcotic and financial security belts.

At the same time, we need to make fuller use of the opportunities offered by regional associations, which have proven their effectiveness in this area of work, in particular the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Strengthening counter-narcotic and counter-terrorist protection around the Afghan State will not only significantly weaken the financial resources of extremists, it will also help achieve a prompt stabilization of both Afghanistan and the region as a whole. Achieving that goal would also be aided by comprehensively building regional and integration processes.

We share the view of the Secretary-General regarding the vital need to preserve the central role of the United Nations in coordinating international efforts for post-conflict settlement and for the socio-economic reconstruction of Afghanistan. We also fully agree on the adequacy of the current mandate of UNAMA, as confirmed by the report, for an effective resolution of the tasks set forth in the London Compact. We support the proposal of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of UNAMA for another 12-month period.

We welcome the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, Mr. Kai Eide, and we wish him success in his upcoming activities under the mandate to be extended next week by the Council.

The Russian Federation actively participates in implementing projects of vitally important significance for Afghanistan in the areas of energy, transport and mineral processing. A serious contribution to the economic renewal of the country has been made by the agreement to settle Afghan debt to the Russian Federation. On 31 January 2008, in connection with the request by the Government of Afghanistan, we

conducted an operation to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghans suffering from lack of food owing to the harsh winter. A delegation from the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations gave more than 3,000 tons of wheat flour to representatives of the Afghan authorities. The Russian Federation will continue to undertake efforts aimed at stabilizing Afghanistan and resolving the large-scale challenges before it.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of March and expressing our appreciation for the convening of this important meeting on the situation in Afghanistan. On behalf of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I congratulate Mr. Kai Eide on his recent appointment and wish him every success in fulfilling the task entrusted to him. We look forward to working closely with him and promise to do so. We are thankful to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing today and to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan.

Increased terrorist attacks by the enemies of Afghanistan have led to some ill-judged and misguided perceptions of the situation in the Afghanistan. Recent remarks regarding government control or even its failure in Afghanistan are the result of premature assumptions, which have the potential to undermine public support for efforts to achieve lasting peace and security in the country. We should stay the course with firm determination and prevent security nuances from weakening our resolve to achieve our shared goals.

Let us not forget that we, Afghanistan and our international partners, have made undeniable gains towards a strong, stable and democratic Afghanistan. By all standards, the achievements made thus far reflect remarkable progress. Today, a greater part of Afghanistan is secure from terrorism and violence. The fight against terrorists and extremists continues. Thanks to the support of our international partners, our security forces have become stronger and more effective. The Afghan National Army has reached 58,000 troops and has assumed a greater role in the fight against terrorists seeking to destabilize Afghanistan and the region.

With the support of our international partners, we have dismantled more than 120 terrorist bases of operation and apprehended 1,000 terrorists, including foreigners. Among the captured are elite commanders of the Taliban, Al-Qaida rank and file and those responsible for recent terrorist attacks.

In spite of our achievements, significant challenges remain. Providing security for our people is not only our main objective, but also our primary challenge. Terrorists have increased their attacks against civilians, schools, religious figures, security forces and international partners. They have also broadened the scope of their activities in the region. New violent fronts have been opened. Those attacks, which have been carried out by means of hit and run tactics, should not be seen as a sign of the enemy's strength, but rather of their frustration resulting from their inability to engage in direct battles.

The Government of Afghanistan will spare no effort to improve the security of its people. In that regard, we continue to maintain a comprehensive strategy that has both military and political dimensions. While the military campaign remains the centrepiece of our efforts to defeat terrorists and consolidate security, we are according greater attention to political outreach and furthering the national reconciliation process. We reiterate our call to individuals with past grievances to reject violence, abide by the Constitution and join their fellow compatriots in rebuilding their country. In that connection, we welcome the readiness of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to extend its good offices to support our reconciliation efforts.

The interconnected challenges facing Afghanistan require mutually reinforcing efforts to consolidate gains in the areas of security, governance, rule of law, human rights, development and counter-narcotics. Strengthening governance and combating corruption and narcotics remain among our top priorities. We have initiated new measures to improve governance at the provincial and local levels. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance has strengthened the links between the provincial administrations and the central Government. It has also led to progress in a variety of areas at the provincial and district levels, including the sustainable delivery of basic services to local communities, disbandment of illegal armed groups, police reform and counter-narcotics.

The Government of Afghanistan has taken numerous measures to combat corruption. Those include the creation of an inter-institutional commission, headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, to address corruption in the public sector; the development of a draft national anti-corruption strategy; and the signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in August 2007. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the challenges of fighting corruption and strengthening the rule of law requires time and resources. We welcome the new emphasis of UNAMA in support of our efforts to strengthen governance and the rule of law.

As the report of the Secretary-General asserts, our counter-narcotics efforts have gained momentum. Following the increase in cultivation and production of opium in 2007, we have taken a series of additional measures to expedite the implementation of our National Drug Control Strategy. In the recent meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in Tokyo, we reached a consensus with our international partners on areas in which immediate action should be taken.

We have prioritized counter-narcotics as a key pillar of our policy advisory group, which aims to improve security in the six provinces with the highest levels of violence. In October of last year we designated 50,000 hectares as the national eradication target for 2008. In addition, to address the mutually reinforcing link between terrorism and narcotics, we will provide force protection for eradication operations. Among other measures taken for a more effective counter-narcotics effort, our National Assembly confirmed a candidate for the post of Minister of Counter-Narcotics just two weeks ago.

Despite the challenges we face, Afghanistan is continuing its reconstruction and its social and economic development. Today, more than 85 per cent of the population is covered by a basic package of health services. Progress in the education sector has enabled nearly 6 million children to gain access to school. Our legal economy has grown by an average of 12 per cent over the past four years, and our per capita gross domestic product has approximately doubled. Five million Afghans have returned home in the hope of a promising future. More than 1,471 kilometres of roads have been built and 737 kilometres remain under construction.

In accordance with our National Action Plan for Women, Afghan women continue to assume a greater role in the social, political and economic life of the country. Our citizens enjoy unprecedented rights. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the challenges in various sectors and remain committed to addressing them resolutely.

To consolidate and advance our gains, we will finalize the Afghan National Development Strategy in the weeks to come. We welcome the upcoming Paris conference, to take place in June 2008, at which we will launch the Strategy, review the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact and discuss the way forward with our international partners. We are working closely with the Government of France in preparation for the Conference.

The people of Afghanistan continue to live under difficult humanitarian conditions. The situation has been exacerbated with the onset of the harshest winter conditions in more than 30 years, which have caused more than 900 fatalities, with hundreds of people suffering from severe frostbite. The severe weather has also devastated our livestock, which is the main source of livelihood for vulnerable families in remote parts of Afghanistan. While expressing gratitude to the humanitarian community for providing emergency aid in the worst-affected provinces, we appeal for urgent delivery of additional humanitarian assistance.

In this connection, we welcome UNAMA's continued coordinating role in ensuring the timely and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as its readiness to assist the Government of Afghanistan to create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of our fellow Afghans from abroad.

The role of the United Nations remains vital for the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. We look forward to the adoption in the coming days of a resolution that will extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. The extension of the mandate will reflect the continuing commitment of the United Nations and the international community to Afghanistan. We are hopeful that it will also mark the beginning of a strengthened, better structured and more effective United Nations role in Afghanistan. The need for greater coordination of the international community's reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan is ever more

evident. In this regard, we underscore the importance of an enhanced coordinating role for the United Nations in consolidating the international community's support and assistance to Afghanistan into a cross-alliance effort. Such coordination is necessary to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of international engagement in and assistance to Afghanistan.

Before concluding, I would like to express my appreciation to the United Nations and the international community for their support towards the achievement of lasting peace, security and stability in Afghanistan. Together, we have come a long way, but our mission has yet to be accomplished. With greater coordination and closer cooperation, we will successfully conclude the journey which we jointly embarked upon more than six years ago.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

First of all, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate.

The European Union welcomes the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2008/159) and the briefing given by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno. We support the recommendations on the future activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), especially the strengthening of UNAMA's central role in coordinating the overall international effort in Afghanistan, in close cooperation with the EU and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Let me add that we welcome the appointment of Kai Eide as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. We look forward to working closely with him.

We look forward to the renewal of UNAMA's mandate, which will reaffirm the international communities support for increased international

cohesion in our collective efforts to support the Government of Afghanistan.

The European Union reaffirms its commitment to long-term support for the people and the Government of Afghanistan and the core principles of promoting Afghan leadership, good governance, responsibility and ownership, and fostering the development of a democratic, secure and sustainable Afghan State with respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The European Union supports the initiative by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, which met in Tokyo on 5 and 6 February, to arrange an international conference in Paris in June to review progress in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, reaffirm the commitment of the international community to Afghanistan and discuss the way forward. In this context, the European Union would like to underline once again its strong support for a comprehensive approach. The European Union calls on the Government of Afghanistan to make further progress on human rights and good governance, including through the establishment of an independent mechanism on senior appointments, the implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy and the approval of a media law consistent with freedom of expression.

The European Union remains committed to working with the Government of Afghanistan to strengthen its human rights institutions and mechanisms. The European Union recalls its urgent appeal to halt any future executions, to re-establish a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and to enhance the implementation of the transitional justice action plan.

The European Union underlines its continued engagement in Afghanistan, including through the bilateral cooperation programmes of EU member States and through the EU's assistance strategy, which contains a substantial multi-year commitment until 2013 and which focuses on governance and the rule of law — particularly on the judiciary and the police — and on rural development and health. The European Union looks forward to the finalization, launch and implementation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and welcomes the participatory process that this has involved to date.

The European Union reaffirms its support for elections in Afghanistan. The EU remains committed to working with the Afghan Government to ensure free

and fair elections in 2009 and 2010. The EU reaffirms that it is for the Afghan Government to decide on the format and timing of the elections. We call on the Afghan Government to ensure that such decisions are made in good time, to allow for adequate preparations.

The EU welcomes the progress of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) towards full deployment at the central, regional and provincial levels. The mission is supporting the development of the Afghan police force under local ownership, with respect for human rights and operating within the framework of the rule of law. The EU remains committed to addressing the multiple challenges lying ahead, in close cooperation with the Afghan authorities and international partners. The European Union expresses its readiness to consider further enhancement of its engagement, particularly in the spheres of the police and the wider rule of law, in line with the adoption by the Afghan authorities of the National Justice Programme.

The European Union, underlining its overall coherence of objectives with the United Nations and NATO on the basis of the Afghanistan Compact, reaffirms its readiness to work closely with UNAMA and the International Security Assistance Force, inter alia through EUPOL Afghanistan, in order to strengthen the overall coordination of the international community in Afghanistan. The European Union will continue closely to follow developments with regard to Afghanistan, including at the forthcoming NATO summit in Bucharest.

The European Union will keep its policy towards Afghanistan under review in the coming months, in advance of the Paris conference.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Australia appreciates the Secretary-General's report on Afghanistan. We also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all who work within the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We thank Mr. Guéhenno and his team, both here and in the field.

We welcome very much the Secretary-General's appointment of Kai Eide as Special Representative, and we look forward to working closely with him.

This open debate on Afghanistan is timely. It arrives at a time when the international community is

refocusing on the issues of Afghanistan. Of course, I note in particular the upcoming Bucharest summit, which will involve discussion of a comprehensive political/military plan by NATO and non-NATO troop-contributing nations. I am pleased to hear today that the Secretary-General will be attending. Also, of course, as has been mentioned, there is the very important upcoming Paris Conference, which will provide an opportunity for a two-year review of the Afghanistan Compact — in other words, of the broader nation-building task.

I cannot stress enough that the international community as a whole has real and enduring interests in Afghanistan's stability. Afghanistan remains front line in global efforts to defeat terrorism — a threat affecting all countries that support democracy, secularism and moderation. No member of the international community can afford to see Afghanistan succumb again to the forces of extremism and ideological fundamentalism. International success in Afghanistan is clearly a measure of resolve in global efforts on terrorism and is certainly viewed that way by Al-Qaida and other extremist groups.

There have been hard-won gains on stabilization over the past seven years — and I was pleased to hear them referred to by the Ambassador of Afghanistan today — but again, as he said, unless we sustain and reinvigorate international efforts, not just for security tasks, but also for reconstruction and development, progress will be undone. It is essential that we continue to build the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan so that it has the tools to address the challenges the people of Afghanistan will face in the short, medium and long terms.

Australia has recently increased its commitment to capacity-building, with the addition of an operational mentoring and liaison team to provide training and guidance to the Afghan National Army.

The Secretary-General is right to note in his report that there is a clear need for more resources and a more coordinated, integrated approach by the international community to tackling Afghanistan's challenges. That includes coordination of our military and non-military efforts and coordination of our efforts across different provinces and regions, not only by NATO and its International Security Assistance Force partners, but also by the United Nations and other international actors.

We must all be prepared to work towards the same objectives to achieve real success, especially when addressing complex issues such as counter-narcotics. It also means more commitments without caveats and greater focus on deploying resources to where the stabilization challenges are most acute, in particular in the South.

Strengthening United Nations engagement in Afghanistan is crucial to progress on stabilization and establishing the longer-term conditions for peace and security. We encourage increased United Nations engagement, not only in Kabul but also at the provincial level, including, importantly, through a United Nations presence — UNAMA and United Nations agencies — in the South, including Uruzgan.

Special Representative Eide will have the important task of communicating to the people of Afghanistan the strong commitment of the United Nations and its Members to the people and the Government of Afghanistan, and our united efforts to foster stability and development throughout the country. As the Secretary-General notes in his report,

"[t]he guiding principle of UNAMA activities is to reinforce Afghan leadership and strengthen international cohesion in support of that leadership" (S/2008/159, para. 64).

In partnership with the Afghan Government, Mr. Eide also has a key role in providing leadership and direction to the efforts of the United Nations, especially to ensure effective coordination of international humanitarian and development activities and their extension to all parts of the country.

Australia is making a major contribution to the international community's efforts in Afghanistan through military and non-military contributions. We have some 1,000 troops focused in Uruzgan province, working in partnership with the Dutch forces. We have committed \$450 million in reconstruction, development and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan since 2001, and we are examining options for an increased Australian police presence. We will remain committed.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I call on the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): I thank the Secretary-General for his latest report on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

New Zealand has been pleased to see progress in Afghanistan, both on the political front and in terms of counter-insurgency operations over the past year, as the Ambassador of Afghanistan reported this morning, but the overall situation does remain of concern. The security situation, especially in the South and the East, seriously hampers development and limits the reach of the Afghan Government. Opium production is undermining Afghanistan's future. There is a need for much greater effort to develop alternative sustainable livelihoods.

We see security, governance, development and reconciliation of the various factions in Afghanistan as the four key areas of focus for the Afghan Government, acting with the support of the international community. To a significant extent, those four areas of focus are interdependent. The relative weight given to each is important. We believe that, in the context of a comprehensive approach, there is a need to rebalance, giving added weight to political reconciliation, governance and development.

Since 2001, New Zealand has contributed military personnel to Afghanistan and provides a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamyan province. New Zealand personnel also support the International Security Assistance Force headquarters and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, as well as police training and mentoring in Bamyan. Alongside those contributions to security, New Zealand contributes to other priority areas of the Afghanistan Compact, such as rural livelihood programmes, education and health services, and capacity development of provincial governmental and non-governmental and civil society organizations. We support the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission through a core contribution. All programming seeks to empower women, as we see women's participation as a key to achieving peace and security.

New Zealand endorses the importance attached by the Secretary-General in his report to assistance with the building of local governance structures, which is a priority for the Government of Afghanistan. We also welcome the readiness he has signalled for the United Nations to play a more central role in the coordination of international aid and to help promote political reconciliation in Afghanistan. The role of the new Special Representative, Mr. Kai Eide, will take on added importance as we enter that new phase in the

struggle to secure Afghanistan's future, and we wish him well on his assignment.

In closing, while we welcome the progress in Afghanistan in recent years, we also appreciate that the international community needs to remain committed to sustained efforts for Afghanistan to have a positive future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. De Palacio España (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish at the outset to align myself with the statement made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the presidency of the European Union. I also thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno most sincerely for the presentation of the report.

Spain is grateful for the opportunity afforded to it its delegation to participate in this open debate, which allows me to reiterate Spain's commitment — especially following the recent elections in my country, through which the electorate's trust in our Government was affirmed — to a secure, stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan that is free from the threat of terrorism and living in peace and close cooperation with its neighbours.

Spain believes that the international community should continue to focus its efforts on the fundamental goal of consolidating a sustainable political system that generates sufficient consensus among the Afghan people and is able on its own to ensure the country's security.

We support the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as his new Special Representative for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). I convey to Mr. Eide my sincere congratulations and the support of our Government, so that he can contribute to strengthening the political leadership of the United Nations and the coordination among all the international actors in Afghanistan and with the Afghan Government itself.

As it always has, Spain believes that the United Nations must continue to play a central role in the process of stabilizing and rebuilding Afghanistan. In order to do that, we must further increase UNAMA's coverage and presence so that it can carry out its functions throughout the territory of Afghanistan. In

that regard, we support the efforts that could be made together with the international community in providing advice on controlling the production of narcotics.

In order to be effective, we must continue to follow a comprehensive approach that, while not undermining the important aspect of security, is increasingly focused on the political and civilian dimensions of Afghanistan's reconstruction — namely, promoting good governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development, as well as ensuring that the Afghan Government gradually assumes its responsibilities.

I should now like to dwell on that point in order to reiterate the European Union's appeal for the restoration of the de facto moratorium on the death penalty and the suspension of the future imposition of capital punishment in Afghanistan.

We are pleased to note that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy is about to be adopted, which should serve as the framework of reference for ensuring that international assistance responds to the priorities established by the Afghan Government. Among those priorities, it is our view that the Afghanization of the security forces — the army and the police — should have priority attention. Likewise, efforts should be stepped up to extend the Afghan Government's authority throughout the whole of its territory by strengthening provincial and local institutions and training and building the capacity of public officials and civil servants, thereby taking decisive steps towards improving good governance at the local level and combating corruption.

We believe that the international conference to be held in Paris should undertake an analysis of what has been achieved to date in political terms and not be just another donor conference. That should make it possible to provide the comprehensive approach to which I have referred while reaffirming the leadership of the United Nations and encouraging the Afghan Government to assume its responsibilities. The Paris conference should also lead to decisive steps towards strengthening international coordination in setting priorities for the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact.

Spain supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to renew UNAMA's mandate for another 12 months under the current terms. There will be time ahead to consider whether there is a need for

changes to the mandate. In order to do that, the new Special Representative will have to assess the situation on the ground. In that connection, it will be especially important to support the upcoming elections — upon which the credibility of the system will depend — and to expand coordination with the International Security Assistance Force.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Hyun Chong (Republic of Korea): Since the adoption of the Bonn Agreement, in December 2001, and despite many continuing challenges, Afghanistan has achieved important political progress, culminating in the first-ever direct presidential election, in October 2004, and the parliamentary elections of 2005. The international community must continue to work closely with Afghanistan to ensure that those successes have a lasting impact. While much has been accomplished, many challenges still lie ahead of us. It would be presumptuous to believe that our work is nearing completion. My delegation feels that 2008 is a critical year for achieving comprehensive peace and security in Afghanistan.

The Republic of Korea acknowledges that the deteriorating security situation, compounded by a resurgence of the Taliban and other extremist groups as well as an increase in terror attacks and criminal drug trafficking, hampers not only the reconstruction process but also the implementation of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy as a whole.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the continuing instability in certain areas of the country. The gravity of the situation is underlined by cases of abduction and murder of Afghan and foreign civilians, including the Taliban's 2007 kidnapping of 23 citizens of the Republic of Korea, two of whom were subsequently killed. In addition, we strongly condemn the recent spate of terror attacks, including those near Kandahar last month and in Kabul in January, which were directed against civilians, including many women and children.

That overall lack of security is also hindering the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland. Because of this, only 5,000 Afghan refugees returned home in all of 2007. That can be compared with the 5,000 refugees returning daily during the peak of refugee returns in 2004.

In taking note of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Afghanistan, we agree that re-establishing lasting security requires a multidimensional strategy coordinating military, police, political and economic and social activities. Essential to the success of that strategy are the efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), working in close coordination with the Government of Afghanistan and the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. Another important factor will be enhanced coordination and cooperation between the central and provincial governments, so that security policies at the local level will be more effective.

We are also concerned about the increasing threat that drug trafficking poses to the national security, social development and overall governance of Afghanistan. Poppy cultivation reached yet another record high in 2007 — up more than a third from 2006. Until the Afghan people can find other sources of income, many will continue to engage in that criminal business, which also breeds corruption at the highest levels. The Republic of Korea expects that Afghanistan will continue to work towards fully implementing the National Drug Control Strategy presented by its Government at the London Conference. We stand ready to join international support for the Strategy, as evidenced by our contribution of \$200,000 to the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund last year.

The Republic of Korea is encouraged by the recent efforts of the United Nations and the Afghan Ministry of Education to build nearly 300 new schools and train 48,000 teachers in preparation for the upcoming school year. Nearly 6.2 million children are expected to attend school this year — up from 5.7 million in 2007. However, challenges remain with regard to gender disparity and the number of students who complete primary school.

The Republic of Korea has strongly supported the reconstruction process in Afghanistan. Building upon our contribution of approximately \$60 million in grant aid to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2005, we have set aside \$20 million for the subsequent three-year period for projects focusing on human resource development, agricultural and rural area development and public administration efficiency. In addition, reconstruction and medical units from my country have been contributing to the Afghan reconstruction process since

their deployment in February 2002. We pledge to continue our commitment to the reconstruction, development and stabilization of Afghanistan in the years ahead.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for giving a comprehensive briefing on the situation in Afghanistan this morning. Japan also welcomes very warmly the appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and expresses its commitment to supporting him in meeting important challenges.

This year marks the halfway point in the implementation process of the Afghanistan Compact. As Chair of the Group of 8 (G-8) this year, Japan hosted the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) last month to review the progress to date and to discuss the way forward. As the participants noted, there have been tangible achievements in the reconstruction of the country since launching the Compact. This could not have been done without the combination of the best efforts of the Afghan Government and the commitment of the international community.

With the finalization of the Afghan National Development Strategy now in sight, the nation-building of the country is expected to shift from the reconstruction phase to the development phase. Japan is fully committed to supporting the efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, various challenges lie ahead on this path.

The security situation is most worrying. To create stability, which is essential for economic development, international forces need to remain committed to the daunting task of eradicating terrorism in the country. Japan applauds the dedicated efforts of many countries in providing forces and personnel.

Success also hinges upon the strengthening of the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces. For Japan's part, I am pleased to report that Japan has rejoined the international fight against terrorism by resuming its refueling activities in the Indian Ocean.

Japan also attaches importance to the disbandment of illegal armed groups as a means to improve the long-term security situation. We are

pleased to note that 161 illegal armed groups have been disbanded to date. Registration of firearms has been progressing as well. The establishment of a unit for the disbandment of illegal armed groups in the Ministry of the Interior will also be a step forward in nationalizing that process. Building on this progress, disbandment operations must be further enhanced and accelerated. Japan remains committed to supporting the efforts of the Afghan Government in that area as well.

Another area of concern is narcotics. As the recent survey of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime indicated, the situation of opium poppy cultivation will continue to remain worrisome this year. We welcome that the Tokyo JCMB meeting endorsed the Afghan Government's implementation plan of counter-narcotics measures, placing greater focus on actions at the provincial level.

To address these challenges, a holistic and comprehensive approach is essential. Japan has extended \$1.36 billion in assistance to Afghanistan in line with its own holistic initiative called the "Consolidation of Peace in Afghanistan", which encompasses the political process, security, governance and reconstruction. As a part of these efforts, Japan recently announced an additional \$110 million assistance, focusing on projects in border areas shared with Pakistan and Iran. A project to enhance the capacity of the Afghan Government for border control is also included.

Coordination is, of course, another requirement. For efficient and effective assistance, coordination of assistance activities is of vital importance. The

coordination of the military strategy, the political process and the development strategy is needed to ensure that each element successfully takes root. The role of the United Nations here is significant, now more than ever, for coordinating between the efforts of the Afghan Government and international actors. We very much look forward to working closely with the newly appointed Special Representative in this regard.

As for the mandate of United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, we stress the importance of the smooth extension of the mandate at this critical juncture to demonstrate that the international community is united in supporting the activities of the United Nations. Japan supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the current mandate for 12 months. We also welcome the Secretary-General's approach, namely, to focus on several key areas, including the readiness to take a further coordination role within the existing mandate.

Japan, in its capacity as Chair of the G-8, will pursue synergy between the discussion in the G-8 summit process, as well as those reviews and discussions taking place in the United Nations and other forums, so that we may better support the efforts to consolidate peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3.05 p.m.

**Security Council**

Sixty-third year

*Provisional***5851st meeting**Wednesday, 12 March 2008, 3 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Payot
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Somdah
	China	Mr. Li Kexin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Ballesterro
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Guidée
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	South Africa	Mr. Seakamela
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Bayley
	United States of America	Mr. Kujawinski
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda**The situation in Afghanistan**

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2008/159)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President (spoke in Russian): I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated at the morning meeting, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes — this, in accordance with the agreement in the Council — so as to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): First of all, let me congratulate you on behalf of the delegation of Pakistan on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are confident that with your well-known skills, this will be a most successful month for the Council.

I would also like to express our appreciation to the Ambassador and the delegation of Panama for their successful presidency last month.

We appreciate the convening of this open debate on Afghanistan. Two years after the London Conference, it is opportune to have a strategic review of the progress in the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. A peaceful and stable Afghanistan is crucial to regional and international peace and security. As the country most affected by the decades of instability in Afghanistan, Pakistan has a direct and vital stake in the success of the efforts of the international community in Afghanistan.

We appreciate the overall quality of the analysis, objectivity and recommendations of the Secretary-General's latest report on Afghanistan. While avoiding dramatic description, the report is reflective of the challenges and the realities on the ground. It provides a useful overview of the situation which is relevant to the Council's discussion, particularly with regard to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). There have been many successes, which must be appreciated and consolidated. There are deficiencies in several areas. However, what is most needed is better implementation, through enhanced coordination and the fulfilment of reciprocal commitments by Afghanistan and its international partners.

We believe that the key to success lies in pursuing a comprehensive approach, with emphasis on building Afghan capacity to assume greater control and ownership with regard to security, governance and development issues. We are pleased to note that that is also the central theme of the report of the Secretary-General.

The deterioration of the security situation in parts of Afghanistan is a common concern. As is clear from the present and previous United Nations reports, the factors contributing to insecurity and instability are diverse, complex and often interrelated. They also vary from region to region. Therefore, there is a need to follow approaches that are responsive to the challenges in each region. Increasing the strength of the troops of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) would help in the short term. However, for sustainable solutions, it is essential to focus more on building the national capacity of Afghanistan in the security sector, together with parallel endeavours aimed at political reconciliation, reconstruction and development.

A more coherent and feasible counter-narcotics policy is required, one that is more responsive to the underlying economic, social and political aspects linked to increased poppy cultivation. That is essential if we wish to deny an important source of funding to insurgents and other anti-Government elements.

Extending State authority and improving governance are also fundamental in restoring the confidence of the population in the ability of the Government to respond to their basic needs. The efforts of the Afghan Government in that regard merit our full support.

Security and governance issues cannot be divorced from development. As the report notes, despite progress in various social and economic indicators, the level of development is low, particularly at the provincial and district levels. Making security a prerequisite for development and assistance could prove to be counter-productive. We believe it is important to pursue the development track while security is being addressed. The launch of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy will be an important milestone and a major source of hope for the Afghan people. The international community must ensure adequate resources for its implementation. We hope that it will also inculcate a new culture of

assistance that is demand-driven and channelled mostly through the Afghan Government.

All these efforts to improve security, governance and development will have a greater impact if they are carried out in a politically propitious environment. The Afghan-led efforts for national reconciliation can play an important role in that regard and should be encouraged.

The agreements already reached, and other policies and measures being considered to promote regional economic cooperation, will benefit Afghanistan and all the countries of the region. Pakistan is an important partner in this endeavour. We will also host the next regional economic cooperation conference on Afghanistan.

The safe and voluntary return of all remaining Afghan refugees, more than 2 million of whom are still hosted by Pakistan, should also be accorded high priority. We welcome the emphasis placed in the report on increased assistance to create conditions conducive to the return of the refugees. However, we do not agree with the Secretary-General's observation that the fact that over 80 per cent of the refugees have been in exile for more than 20 years could be a factor inhibiting their return. All refugees should return to their homeland.

We appreciate the central and impartial role of the United Nations in coordinating the international efforts in Afghanistan. We welcome the appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as the Secretary-General's Special Representative. UNAMA's efforts should be focused on its core mandate in Afghanistan. We agree with the Secretary-General that UNAMA's existing mandate should be retained. We have also noted the areas identified by the Secretary-General as priorities for UNAMA. These should be carefully considered to ensure that they are totally consistent with UNAMA's current mandate and that they take into account the views of the host Government and others concerned. Given the realities on the ground, it is essential to avoid placing responsibilities on the United Nations that it may be not in a position to discharge and that could affect its neutrality and credibility.

Pakistan remains strongly committed to helping Afghanistan to achieve sustainable peace and development. Our destinies are interlinked. We seek to strengthen our close, friendly relations with Afghanistan, based on reciprocity and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We want peace and greater prosperity for both our peoples. Our cooperation with Afghanistan is multifaceted. It is characterized by dialogue and regular exchange of visits at the highest levels. We are also trying to help reconciliation through the peace jirga, whose next meeting will be held in Pakistan.

Pakistan is a major contributor to Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic development. A number of projects identified in consultation with the Afghan Government have been implemented in various fields, including infrastructure development, education and health, in addition to capacity-building initiatives and training and scholarship programmes. We shall consider ways and means of designing our future assistance in accordance with the priorities of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Our bilateral trade with Afghanistan totals \$1.5 billion. We shall continue to support Afghanistan's integration with regional economic cooperation efforts. Indeed, the success of these endeavours requires peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Pakistan's ability to contribute to peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region will be enhanced following the recent fair and open elections in Pakistan and the assumption of office by a popularly elected Government. We hope that these will lead to closer coordination and consensus on a strategy for success in Afghanistan and in the region.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of Iceland.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): In support of the statement made on behalf of the European Union, I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Iceland.

The five Nordic countries engage in extensive cooperation in Afghanistan and are, by virtue of their coordinated efforts, among the major contributors to the stabilization and reconstruction of the country. We support the emerging consensus that the United Nations must take on a stronger role in the coordination of international efforts and that it must give a much-needed boost to the stabilization and development of Afghanistan, and we welcome this opportunity to reaffirm the central role of the United Nations. We also welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Kai Eide of Norway as his new Special Representative and hope that the discussions in

the Security Council will serve to give him and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) the support and mandate that they need in order to take on the challenging tasks ahead.

UNAMA's role in coordination and in providing support to the Afghan authorities must be strengthened with a view to reinforcing Afghan leadership and enhancing international cohesion. That includes coordination with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which plays a key role, under a Security Council mandate, in establishing a secure environment for reconstruction and development. The provisions of the Afghanistan Compact and national strategies such as the upcoming Afghan National Development Strategy should be the foundations of our engagement.

In order to enable UNAMA and the new Special Representative to meet expectations in leading the coordination of international efforts in Afghanistan, the Security Council and United Nations Member States must give them the political backing and authority needed. It is also essential that expectations are matched by resources and the United Nations be given full support to exert its leading role and more fully accomplish all aspects of the UNAMA mandate.

We welcome the focus of the Secretary-General on sub-national governance, call for a further increase in the United Nations presence at the provincial level and would welcome an update on the efforts made to fill vacant posts in UNAMA to strengthen geographical coverage. Increased coverage would enable the United Nations to better focus on capacity-building for Afghan authorities at all levels and we note the efforts of the national Government in strengthening governance throughout Afghanistan, in particular through the creation of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance.

Humanitarian challenges remain extensive, and we are concerned that large areas of the country remain inaccessible to assistance due to insecurity. We look forward to the adoption of the Security Council resolution renewing the mandate of UNAMA.

The human rights situation in Afghanistan is precarious at best and human rights abuses are widespread. We encourage the Afghan Government to clearly demonstrate its commitment towards improving and protecting the human rights of all Afghans and to show leadership in championing core human rights issues such as freedom of speech and the rule of law.

An independent human rights commission and a strong, pluralistic civil society are important achievements and imperative for introducing internationally recognized human rights standards into Afghanistan.

We support the observation of the Secretary-General on the need for a common approach that integrates security, governance, rule of law, human rights and social and economic development. An integrated approach should not only focus on the immediate security challenges, but combine the political, development and security efforts, so that they better mutually support each other. An integrated approach should also be based on a gender perspective and acknowledge the need for efforts to fight discrimination and strengthen the participation of Afghan women in all those areas and in society at large.

Efforts to establish security, including through training the Afghan National Security Forces, are essential. In recognition of the link between security and development, the efforts of the United Nations, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) should be as coherent and coordinated as possible. Measures to that end will be discussed at the NATO/International Security Assistance Force summit in Bucharest next month. The role of UNAMA is key in creating a more coherent and unified approach by the international community and vis-à-vis the Afghan Government.

Finally, a strengthened role for the United Nations in Afghanistan needs to make use of the capacities and efforts of the entire United Nations system. The activities of the United Nations Country Team should effectively support the implementation of the mandate and overall objectives of UNAMA.

We believe the report of the Secretary-General and the comments provided will contribute positively to improved results for the Afghan people through our continued engagement in Afghanistan. We reaffirm our long-term commitment to contribute to that effect.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on Afghanistan. Supporting the Afghan Government and its people in forging a stable, peaceful future remains a top priority for my Government and for Canadians.

We extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his candid and insightful report on the situation in Afghanistan. His report describes a new future that is taking root, as the Afghan Government reaches out to its provinces, parliament finds its voice, women discover new opportunities and an army rises to protect the country. The Secretary-General also reminds us that the future we are pursuing will not be realized if we do not act quickly and in unison to confront a ruthless insurgency and to curb widespread corruption.

Canada welcomes the recent appointment of Mr. Kai Eide as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Afghanistan. We are committed to working with him to ensure that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is able to fulfil its role as adviser, coordinator and leader of the international civilian mission.

Canada also conveys its sincere appreciation to the outgoing Special Representative, Mr. Tom Koenigs, for his determined efforts over the course of the past two years, and to the Acting Special Representative, Mr. Asplund, for his steadfast direction of UNAMA during these first months of the year.

In addition, we take this opportunity to pay tribute to the dedicated efforts of the United Nations and other civilian staff in Afghanistan, who carry out their duties in challenging and often dangerous conditions. Their courage and commitment to Afghanistan have been essential to the progress achieved thus far.

The United Nations remains the bedrock of the international mission in Afghanistan. Now, more than ever, Member States look to UNAMA for leadership and guidance. Better aligning our efforts will require bold decision-making and strong political leadership by the new Special Representative. Canada looks to him to build consensus — where it can be reached — among international civilian actors. We will rely on him to communicate clearly the international community's intentions and concerns to the Afghan Government, while being open to, hearing and addressing their concerns.

It is Canada's hope that the Council will reflect the need for UNAMA to renew relationships and strengthen its offices. We hope that it will also help UNAMA to prioritize the issues that will be central to

progress in 2008, while remaining focused on improving the daily lives of Afghans.

Success in Afghanistan will require a degree of coherence and cooperation that only the United Nations can bring about. To achieve that, UNAMA must be empowered to coordinate and represent those international actors who are party to the Afghanistan Compact. It must work closely with the International Security Assistance Force to build security and to ensure that a strengthened international military commitment is actively enabling the efforts of a robust and resilient civilian presence. In that regard, Canada is very pleased that the Secretary-General will join North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Heads of Government at the NATO/International Security Assistance Force summit to reinforce coordination at the very highest level.

UNAMA must continue to work closely with all levels of the Afghan Government to be certain that international engagement is facilitating the progressive assumption of responsibility by Afghans. Those relationships are central to the success of the Mission.

An enhanced role for the United Nations in Afghanistan will require strengthened UNAMA offices across the country. It will also require the establishment of a permanent United Nations presence in areas where its leadership and coordination are needed. The heavy demands on the provincial and regional offices of the United Nations will only intensify as the reach of the Afghan Government spreads further into the provinces and the international civilian footprint continues to expand. In that context, UNAMA must reinforce its offices. Vacant positions must be staffed, while new ones continue to be created.

Setting priorities will be key. We call on UNAMA to focus its cooperation with the Afghan Government on several important issues in the coming months: elections, subnational governance and reconciliation. Progress on all those fronts is imperative. Indeed, the authority of the Mission rests with the ongoing legitimacy of the Afghan Government in the eyes of its citizens. This is why we must support institutions such as the Independent Directorate for Local Governance, and it is why we must all support Afghan efforts to seek reconciliation with those who are prepared to choose peace.

(spoke in French)

These overarching goals should steer the work of the United Nations. However, they must not distract us from the reality that the people of Afghanistan confront daily. Afghans must have access to jobs that will feed their families; they must feel safe on their streets; and they must be confident when seeking justice from their authorities.

That requires a stronger focus on economic development and more training to build a police force that offers freedom from harassment and theft. It also means renewed vigour in the fight against corruption so that authority can no longer be perceived as distinct from merit and integrity. Each of those issues requires the sustained and serious engagement of the Afghan Government.

Canada has a proud tradition of international engagement. We take seriously our responsibility to promote the values of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We also believe that a multilateral approach is required to address global problems. The long road that Canada has travelled alongside its partners in Afghanistan over the past five years has only deepened its commitment to those principles. We have demonstrated our commitment through a contribution of development aid unparalleled in our history. We have done so through the deployment of our brave men and women, civilians and soldiers, to one of the most dangerous parts of Afghanistan. And we have done so through our unwavering support for the United Nations and its important mission. Canada is committed to helping Afghanistan build a stable and democratic future. It is that determination that motivates our call for a stronger and more prominent United Nations role in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, we recognize that our expectations are high and that ours are not small requests. We make them in the full knowledge of the difficult terrain on which the United Nations must respond. We make them as we stand ready to support all such endeavours and remain committed to the success of our collective mission.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Ilkin (Turkey): Turkey has already aligned itself with the European Union statement. Therefore, I will refer to a few issues that, in our opinion, deserve particular attention.

First and foremost, we all have to remind ourselves that we are not failing in Afghanistan. Yes, we are not yet where we would like to be, and it is obvious that fully achieving our objectives will take longer than we initially expected, but that does not mean that we are on the losing side. After all, we are talking about a country that has been devastated by violent wars for decades. No one should expect a fast and easy recovery. What is important is to be able to remain committed and to take up with full determination every challenge and opportunity as it presents itself. That is extremely important because those who want to take Afghanistan back to its dark days aspire to do so mainly by weakening our resolve. They are hoping that the international community will tire itself out and eventually abandon Afghanistan to its fate.

Allowing that to happen would be a disaster, especially when one considers that Afghanistan is one of the top priorities for the entire international community. Indeed, a failure there would be seen as the failure of everything we stand for everywhere. In that regard, we should not allow ourselves to be carried away by events and incidents of the day, but should be able to see the general trends because, although they may be modest, it is those positive trends in many areas, ranging from education to healthcare, that contain elements enabling us to look forward to a bright future for Afghanistan.

Having said all that, can we then just be content with the way we are proceeding? Of course we cannot. There is certainly no room for complacency. On the contrary, because of the very reasons I just mentioned, we must be ever more determined, active and vigilant. The challenges facing us are tremendous and a setback in any one of them could deal a serious blow to our collective efforts to bring about stability and prosperity in Afghanistan.

To understand those challenges, one need look nowhere else than the Secretary-General's recent report. We fully agree not only with the observations set out in the report, but also with its recommendations, in particular as to the need for a common approach that integrates security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development. For that, there needs to be a strong partnership between the Afghan Government, the United Nations, NATO and the rest of the international community under strict Afghan ownership and

leadership. Also, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the Afghanistan Compact should continue to be the foundations of our efforts. We should now be able to carry on with a robust and effective implementation phase.

At this critical stage, there is no doubt that the United Nations has a key role to play in leading the efforts of the international community. Here again, we are in full agreement with the priority areas identified in the Secretary-General's report. In particular, the need for enhanced coordination and political outreach remains essential to the success of that approach. We hope that the Security Council resolution to be adopted next week to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will reflect those very pertinent points.

I take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kai Eide. We are confident that, under his able leadership, UNAMA will effectively deliver what is expected of it. In that challenging endeavour, Turkey will lend it every support.

In fact, Turkey has already made extensive contributions to security and development in Afghanistan, as evidenced by, among other things, our significant support for the International Security Assistance Force and sizeable reconstruction assistance, rendered mainly through our Provincial Reconstruction Team in Vardak, and we will continue our efforts unrelentingly by exploring every opportunity.

To that end, and to give just one example, we are now providing emergency humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people hard hit by severe winter conditions. Moreover, we are also determined to take forward the trilateral cooperation process that we spearheaded between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey.

Before concluding, I should like to reiterate Turkey's strong commitment to Afghanistan's stability, security and prosperity. As one Afghan diplomat once told me, Turkey is the closest neighbour of Afghanistan without common borders. Therefore, we are resolved to act in keeping with the responsibilities of that privileged status.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Sen (India): Let me begin by placing on record India's commitment to working closely with Ambassador Kai Eide and his colleagues in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as he takes on his new responsibilities as Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I wish him every success in his new responsibilities.

Today's debate is opportune, as it is set in the context of the Secretary-General's report on Afghanistan and the Council's consideration of the renewal of the mandate of UNAMA. Since this debate is to contribute to the latter while drawing upon the former, it is worthwhile to restate our goals in Afghanistan and to rededicate ourselves to achieving them in the most appropriate manner.

The central objective of the international community is to assist Afghanistan to complete its re-emergence from decades of war, civil strife and privation. We have set ourselves the goal of assisting Afghanistan to emerge as a modern democratic country rooted in its unique culture, at peace with itself, secure in its neighbourhood and on the path to sustainable economic development.

Each of those processes needs to be "Afghanized" at a pace and in a manner that is acceptable to the Afghan people and their Government. The prioritization of tasks in an environment as challenging as it is in Afghanistan is a difficult task, but we must let this be an Afghan-led process. As the Secretary-General's report notes, efforts are needed to ensure that "international assistance is driven by demand rather than by supply" (*S/2008/159, para. 4*). That is not to say that international partners should not have input in drawing up a list of priorities; but, at the end of the day, Afghan interlocutors should have the final say on where scarce resources — manpower and money — are allocated.

From that standpoint, our collective energies must be directed towards what is very clearly the first priority for the Afghan people, namely, security. As the report of the Secretary-General notes, "Provinces not affected by anti-Government violence have demonstrated an increasing capacity for delivering governance and economic development." (*ibid., para. 11*). India is convinced that effective, people-centric administration closely follows robust efforts to provide security. Development and security are closely intertwined and, on both, the international community

and the United Nations must be in closer coordination with each other and with relevant Afghan agencies.

To do so, on the one hand, while pressing forward forcefully in terms of security operations, we must also pay more attention to building capacity in the Afghan National Army and the National Police. I have been briefed by my colleague about what the Ambassador of Afghanistan has said about security, anti-terrorism and capacity-building. I share those views and would support them very strongly. Both those institutions require much more support in terms of training and the provision of equipment. There is also a need to devise new strategies to achieve optimum results in that regard. We must also bolster the security effort through stronger collective action, within Afghanistan and outside it, in ensuring that terrorist groups and their patrons are deprived of shelter, financing and ideological support. We should neither underestimate the Taliban and Al-Qaida nor fight terrorism with any less military and political determination than in the immediate post-2001 days.

The counter-narcotics effort is precisely at the intersection of the effort to assist the Government to establish its authority, the fight against terror and organized crime and the challenge of poverty alleviation and development.

The report of the Secretary-General exhorts the Government to muster the political will on the issue of eradication — sensitivities on this exist — and take measures against erring public officials and large landowners. That is part of the picture, but equally important are effective disincentives against poppy cultivation, in contrast to efforts to legitimize the practice via so-called legal opiates. However, international partners must also make corresponding efforts to upgrade Afghan capacity to take more effective action to prevent cross-border smuggling and movements, and work in a united way in support of actions by Afghan agencies, and internationally, to stem demand for narcotics products.

We must also simultaneously ramp up efforts to build local capacity across the board — from administration to security, from civil engineering to medical science. For India, capacity-building is a priority area, as we believe that that is one area of assistance that requires minimal investment but yields maximal long-term benefits. Additionally, a core capacity-building component can be added easily to all

our aid projects in Afghanistan. India is already including a strong capacity-development component in all infrastructure projects it is executing in Afghanistan.

We must also reflect about the methods we employ to achieve those goals. Any objective analysis will tell us that despite the large investment in human capital and treasury resources, the international community is still faced with a significant challenge in ensuring that our objectives are met in Afghanistan. Quite clearly, apart from underlining our unshakeable determination to stay the course in Afghanistan, we need to improve the cohesion of our efforts.

To put it another way, to strengthen the connection between the Afghan people and their Government requires far more coordination among international partners, and between us and the Afghan Government. The United Nations is not only the best qualified, but also the most appropriate body to do so. However, we cannot achieve better coordination unless we give UNAMA the tools to bring about greater cohesion; and better cohesion is predicated upon more comprehensive access to information. Therefore, in providing a mandate for UNAMA to play a coordinating role, it is important to clearly outline an operational relationship between those two bodies, so that information on aid flows and on projects under implementation can be comprehensively mapped.

At the same time, UNAMA must also be mandated to increasingly streamline international assistance in support of a prioritized Afghan National Development Strategy, once it is adopted, and the core budget. That will have the effect of bringing credibility to the Strategy while bolstering the budget, and at the same time it will underscore that our assistance is in line with priorities set by Afghanistan.

India is fully committed to implementing the inter-related security, political and developmental challenges facing Afghanistan. Our commitment to reconstruction, development and capacity-building in Afghanistan is unflinching. India's assistance programme has now exceeded \$750 million, and it spans the gamut of requirements — ranging from developing capacity to infrastructure and reconstruction. As a committed development partner of Afghanistan, India is willing to actively participate in any United Nations-led effort to improve donor cohesion, in support of Afghan-defined priorities.

In conclusion, let me also reiterate our abiding belief in the determination of the Afghan people to look beyond the tragedies of the past and to seize the opportunities that the future holds, on which my colleague the Afghan Ambassador spoke so eloquently. The international community must not fail them by displaying weakness of resolve, or by setting unrealistic benchmarks of progress. Our approach needs to be guided by the recognition of the distance Afghanistan has traversed in the past six years, rather than being derailed by the image of an idealized version of what we would like Afghanistan to be. We hope that the recognition of those realities will increasingly inform discussions on the subject of assistance to Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. De Klerk (Netherlands): Thank you, Mr. President, for providing my delegation the opportunity to participate in this open debate.

The Netherlands fully supports the statement made this morning by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union (EU), including his appreciation for the introduction provided by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and his warm words of welcome for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Eide. In the light of our substantial contribution, both militarily and in the field of development, we would like to make a few additional remarks on Afghan leadership and the role of the international community.

Almost every week, think tanks and non-governmental organizations produce reports about Afghanistan and the recommended course of action for the international community. Those reports sometimes overlook the fact that the primary responsibility for improving the destiny of the Afghan people indeed lies with the Government of President Karzai.

We praise the great efforts the Government of Afghanistan has made to bring stability and development to its people. For instance, this month the Afghan Government will be putting the finishing touches to the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. In our view, all international actors should, to the greatest extent possible, bring their aid efforts into line with the framework of that Afghan-led Strategy. Increasingly, Afghans will need to supply the sheet music for the many voices of the international choir.

Afghan ownership also means Afghan leadership. Afghan authorities will increasingly have to provide public services themselves. The Afghan Army will have to provide security on its own, while the police maintain public order. Afghans will also have to seriously fight corruption and the drug trade, both of which are undermining the State. We also look forward to progress in the area of transitional justice. None of those changes will happen overnight. For our part, we will support them wherever we can.

As far as the difficult situation in southern Afghanistan is concerned, we believe that the Government of Afghanistan needs to secure an enduring political settlement. That will require an effective stabilization programme that supports outreach efforts to reconcile Afghan communities and disenfranchised groups and bring them into the political process. Ordinary Afghans have to be shown that progress is being made on the issues that affect their daily lives. To support that process, the Afghan Army and the International Security Assistance Force will need to maintain sufficient military pressure on the insurgency.

Let me also say a few words about the international community. The comprehensive report (S/2008/159) of the Secretary-General issued on 6 March rightly underscores the synergy in objectives between the United Nations, NATO, the EU and bilateral donors. We hope that the new resolution on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will build on that by further strengthening the centrality of the United Nations. To be more precise, as long as Afghan institutions need international support to deal with development and governance, the United Nations needs to take a lead role in coordinating international efforts.

We welcome the high priority that Mr. Guéhenno has attached to cooperation between the United Nations and NATO in Afghanistan, symbolized by the presence of the Secretary-General at the upcoming meeting to be held in Bucharest. We also welcome the consideration of expanding UNAMA's presence in the country. Asking the United Nations to take the lead means that we, the international community, must be prepared to give the United Nations the authority to direct international efforts and that all other actors need to be willing to be coordinated. We are very much looking forward to Ambassador Eide taking up his functions as the new Special Representative for

Afghanistan. We trust he will play a pivotal role in better coordinating reconstruction and development programmes on the ground.

Our goal should be to put our national hobbyhorses out to pasture and replace them with a strong multilateral engagement led by the United Nations. The provincial reconstruction team — a provincial military base used as a platform for aid efforts for lack of an alternative — was, for instance, always intended to be a temporary solution. The Taliban and the drug traffickers are, however, not confined by provincial borders. Nor indeed are poverty and illiteracy. Thus, one of the provincial reconstruction teams' main duties should be to make themselves redundant as quickly as possible, so that UNAMA, the United Nations funds and programmes and, last but not least, the Afghan local governments can take on their role. Against this background, we would like to encourage the Security Council and the Secretary-General to pursue as a matter of urgency a strengthened role for the United Nations in all of the country, and especially in the troubled south.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Al-Jarman (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month and to wish you every success. I would also like to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Panama, for his successful leadership of the work of the Council last month. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for his comprehensive evaluation of the present situation in Afghanistan. I welcome the Secretary-General's recent decision to appoint Mr. Kai Eide as his Special Representative for Afghanistan and as Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

In spite of some progress made by the international community in Afghanistan over the past six years since the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement — particularly in the areas of advancing economic recovery, building infrastructure, reforming the judiciary system and improving a number of educational, health and local governance services — the political transition process in Afghanistan continues to face serious challenges due to the unsafe and volatile environment, the slow implementation of

national reform programmes and initiatives, a notorious lack of resources and the country's poor infrastructure.

The United Arab Emirates, which has stood by the Afghan people since the beginning of their plight and which has made generous contributions to emergency humanitarian relief and economic recovery and rehabilitation programmes, is deeply concerned at the increasing threat of violence, which continues to impede the country's political and development efforts and which prevents the affected population in 36 districts from having access to humanitarian supplies. Indeed, the threat of violence has also had a direct impact on the lives of innocent civilians, United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers, the personnel of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and members of diplomatic missions. A member of the United Arab Emirates diplomatic mission in Kabul was critically injured last January in an armed attack. Therefore, while we welcome the appointment of the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, as Chairman of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises, we affirm the importance of all parties honouring their obligations to maintain the safety and security of international workers and members of diplomatic missions in accordance with the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents.

In this context, we reiterate the importance of the following subjects. First, it is important to re-evaluate Afghanistan's national security structures and judicial system and to implement a comprehensive strategy aimed at reforming, training and building the capacities of security personnel and the Afghan National Army, especially as regards meeting the requirements of security, fulfilling the country's law enforcement needs and combating armed groups.

Secondly, it is important to mobilize and increase various forms of assistance to the Government of Afghanistan in order to enable it to build its capacities and improve its performance, particularly in achieving national reconciliation, extending central authority to the entire territory of Afghanistan, providing development support to local councils, establishing

alternative development with the support of international partners, implementing the national poverty-reduction strategy, providing essential health, social and educational services and alleviating the suffering of the Afghan people, many of whom remain without electricity and energy to this day.

Thirdly, it is important to strengthen the central and neutral role of the United Nations in leading the international community's efforts in Afghanistan; in coordinating the humanitarian assistance and donor activities in Afghanistan in accordance with the needs of the Afghan people, especially vulnerable sectors; in ensuring provincial reconstruction; in providing technical and financial support for the elections scheduled to be held next year; and in addressing the problem of landmines, a problem which continues to pose a great danger to the Afghan people and which impedes economic recovery. There is also a need to deal with the problem of refugees. In this regard, we reaffirm our support for Afghanistan's proposal to convene an international conference on the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees later this year.

In conclusion, we highly appreciate the substantial efforts made by the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan under the leadership of NATO, by UNAMA and by other international partners with a view to bringing security and stability to Afghanistan and achieving the goals set out within the framework of the Afghanistan Compact of 2006 to improve the lives of the Afghan people. At the same time, we emphasize the importance of focusing on the priorities of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and its implementation mechanisms, so that the Strategy's goals can be achieved, especially those relating to the advancement of peace, development, reconstruction and stability in this friendly country.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing to the Council today. I also would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Tom Koenigs, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and his colleagues in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their hard work and dedication to the cause of the Afghan people.

We congratulate Mr. Kai Eide on his new assignment and wish him every success in that important position. We hope that he will be able to perform his immense duty to improve the situation in Afghanistan in line with the policies of the Afghan Government.

Two years after the adoption of the Afghanistan Compact, the country is witnessing major accomplishments and continuing to face daunting challenges. Undoubtedly, there have been remarkable achievements in certain areas in Afghanistan in recent years.

The Afghan Government is finalizing the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, which will serve as the country's main national planning and budgeting exercise and principal poverty-eradication strategy. Also, as indicated in the report at hand, progress continues in several sectors, including inter alia health services, enrolment in schools, gross domestic product and investment in the natural resources of the country.

At the same time and despite these remarkable accomplishments, threats, such as terrorism and insecurity caused by Al-Qaida, the Taliban and other criminal and terrorist groups, as well as the menace of opium production and drug trafficking, have intensified and continue to be of grave concern.

As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report, in 2007, the level of terrorist activities increased sharply from that of the previous year, as has the number of attacks against local and international humanitarian workers. Many humanitarian workers have, unfortunately, been either killed or abducted. We are concerned about the increase in insecurity and terrorism in Afghanistan and unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism perpetrated in that country.

In our view, to address insecurity in Afghanistan more serious consideration should be given to the necessity of full national ownership by Afghans over the security of their country. Certainly, strengthening the independence and integrity of the Afghan National Security Forces and increasing home-grown security in the country are key to realizing the long-awaited national ownership by Afghans of their own security issues. Additionally, capacity-building and reconstruction of infrastructure, including through utilizing regional potentials, can also contribute to the improvement of the overall situation in Afghanistan.

One of the most daunting challenges facing Afghanistan, with serious consequences for the country, the region and beyond, is the vicious threat posed by the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs. This threat has thus far had serious negative impact on the economic development of Afghanistan and has contributed to insecurity in the country.

It has also caused serious problems for the wider region, especially neighbouring countries, including Iran. As pointed out in the report of the Secretary-General, Afghanistan is emerging as one of the largest suppliers of cannabis in the world and, despite certain efforts made by the Afghan Government to combat this challenge, tangible results in this regard still remain elusive and very limited.

Therefore, more vigorous, decisive and concerted actions, both on the part of Afghanistan and the international community, are needed if this vicious menace is to be tackled in a meaningful and effective way.

It is an unfortunate reality that the progress made in this regard, including through implementation of Afghanistan's national drug control strategy, have been limited and unsatisfactory so far. We concur with the Secretary-General that there is an urgent need to strengthen enforcement activities on eradication and interdiction of trafficking in illicit drugs, including chemical precursors, and dismantling of production facilities.

As a country that has resolutely fought the menace of drug trafficking originating from Afghanistan and as a nation that has endured heavy losses of lives and material in this costly and deadly war over the past three decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be resolute and at the forefront of the world-wide war against drug traffickers and insists on the necessity of more tangible actions on the part of Afghanistan and the international community in this important fight.

As a neighbouring country with deep historical and cultural relations with Afghanistan and as a country that has hosted and continues to host millions of Afghans, Iran has a high stake and a vital interest in the development, stability, security and prosperity of Afghanistan. We have therefore spared no effort to support the Afghan Government in its endeavours to

improve the security and economic situation of the country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has made sincere and concrete contributions to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, and, despite the illegitimate sanctions imposed on our nation, we will continue our development assistance to Afghanistan to the extent possible. The economic development of Afghanistan and that of the region are mutually reinforcing and can not be seen in isolation from one another.

Iran has been actively engaged in various infrastructural projects in Afghanistan, including electricity projects, road and railroad construction, manpower training, health-care services and many other projects.

Moreover, the second phase of our development assistance to Afghanistan is underway and will continue with building railroads to the western part of Afghanistan and completing previous infrastructure projects. The results of Iran's contribution to the reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan are tangible and can be seen in the daily lives of the Afghan people.

Furthermore, our nation has generously hosted millions of Afghan refugees and illegal migrants in the past several decades. We have tried our best to make them feel at home at a time when they were in need and going through hardship.

Now that the situation in Afghanistan is different, we earnestly hope that conditions in that country will pave the way for the repatriation of Afghan refugees to their home country in a timely and promising manner. As indicated in the report at hand, the efforts of both Afghanistan and Iran have continued in order to find mutually acceptable solutions to this problem.

Before concluding, I wish to stress that we attach high importance to the continued impartial and central role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. We believe that the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan should be aimed at reinforcing the leadership and ownership on the part of Afghanistan over the country's affairs, and should be in line with the efforts made by Afghan Government to improve the overall situation in that country. The Government of Afghanistan needs the support of its neighbouring countries but, even more, that of the entire international community.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, for its part, has done and continues to do its utmost to help and strengthen the Government of Afghanistan, under the leadership of President Karzai, so it can assume full ownership and authority over the affairs of the country.

The President: I now give the floor to the permanent representative of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Jeenbaev (Kyrgyzstan) (spoke in Russian): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the member countries of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The situation recently emerging in Afghanistan is of serious concern owing to the stepping up of terrorist activities of the Taliban and Al-Qaida. Extremists continue to impede the assurance of full security in a number of areas. As you know, the level of violence and the number of criminal groups and drug bands continue to grow. This situation undermines confidence in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

There is a need for effective measures to prevent further deterioration of the security situation in this country. Given this, we must continue to seek to isolate extremist leaders, above all, those who are on the sanctions list of the United Nations Security Council 1267 (1999) Committee, while we allow for rank and file Taliban members, not tainted by war crimes, the possibility of full-fledged participation in a peaceful life.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) needs to seek to achieve just those aims within its mandate. At the same time, we believe it would be erroneous to take the view that, by coming to terms with allegedly repentant Taliban, one could achieve stabilization in the situation in this country. Experience has shown us that such an approach only helps to strengthen the positions of extremists and enables them to increase their subversive activities.

The problem of illegal drug trafficking is another complex obstacle preventing the achievement of security and stability for the Afghan people. The subversive activities of extremists and terrorists are funded by significant financial sources, the narcotics trade chief among them. We are greatly concerned at

the continuing poppy cultivation and opium trafficking, which are major sources of financing for the terrorist activities of the Taliban and Al-Qaida. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, that illegal trade poses an immense threat not only to Afghans themselves, but to the international community as a whole.

The fight against the growing production and dissemination of drugs must waged by, inter alia, cutting off the channels for the marketing of narcotics in other regions of the world, particularly Europe. Counter-narcotics efforts must be increased considerably not only in Afghanistan, but also in the surrounding region, through the establishment of a comprehensive system of counter-narcotics and financial security belts, with a coordinating role to be played by the United Nations and with the participation of neighbouring countries. In that regard, we should further utilize the capacities of regional organizations that have demonstrated their effectiveness in this area, particularly the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We believe that practical cooperation must be developed between the CSTO and NATO with respect to counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics efforts. Afghan and Pakistani security forces should be involved, in particular by allowing them to participate in Operation Channel, regularly carried out by the CSTO, aimed at establishing a counter-narcotics belt along the borders of Afghanistan. The Operation has developed effective mechanisms for combating drug trafficking that have been in operation for a number of years along the northern route — that is, the route from Afghanistan to Europe.

As a result of those operations, the competent authorities of the States members and Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, China and Ukraine, as observer States of the CSTO, have removed dozens of tons of drugs from the illegal trade. We are pleased to note that, in September 2007, Afghanistan participated for the first time in Operation Channel. We also note that it is important that the CSTO and NATO have concluded an agreement on all aspects of Afghanistan-related issues.

We are convinced that additional measures must be taken to build the combat capacities of the Afghan armed forces, so that they can eventually ensure the country's security independently. We must re-evaluate

the way in which we equip the Afghan National Army. We must ensure that it has modern weaponry, including air assets and armoured vehicles, and that we improve the professional training of its personnel. CSTO member States are developing cooperation with Afghanistan, including bilateral cooperation, to that end.

But military measures alone are not sufficient to overcome the problems in Afghanistan; it is imperative to fully carry out the tasks set out in the London Afghanistan Compact. The fact that that document was adopted by consensus attests to the international community's firm resolve to continue to provide broad support for post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. To that end, deadlines have been established for addressing key problems in the areas of security, counter-narcotics, governance and human rights. It is essential that, in international efforts on the Afghan front, the central coordinating role continue to be played by the United Nations, under whose leadership the comprehensive monitoring and coordination of the Compact's implementation must continue.

A crucial factor in ensuring long-term stabilization in Afghanistan is the participation of all components of society, including various political, ethnic and religious groups, in the building of an effective and sovereign Afghan State. CSTO member States are committed to the long-term reconstruction of Afghanistan. We are prepared to continue to assist the regional cooperation process by participating in the international efforts in the country in key areas, including security, economic rehabilitation and counter-narcotics efforts.

We believe that an important factor in promoting a comprehensive settlement is the development of multifaceted cooperation between Afghanistan and other States in the region. To that end, Afghanistan assistance programmes should involve regional partners, including through their implementation of contracts with donor countries and international organizations and their participation in the implementation of a number of projects to rebuild energy facilities and the transportation infrastructure in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I should like to wish Mr. Kai Eide every success in fulfilling his mandate.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of Kazakhstan.

Ms. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): Permit me to begin by expressing our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the situation in Afghanistan. I would also like to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his report (S/2008/159).

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan on behalf of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The reason that I have taken the floor is that Afghanistan is located in the Central Asian region, and the security situation and the development of that country are of great importance for Kazakhstan.

As was duly pointed out in the Secretary-General's report, entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", despite some progress in the peace process and in the reconstruction in Afghanistan, the resolution of problems in the country continues to face serious difficulties. The overall situation in Afghanistan continues to be characterized by persistent problems in the area of security, while the Taliban and other extremist elements continue to pose challenges to stability in Afghanistan.

The international community and Afghanistan still face enormous tasks if they are to strengthen the new executive authority, build the country's statehood and rehabilitate its social and economic situation. Thus, in order to meet the security challenge and to stabilize Afghanistan, a complex approach is needed — an approach that encompasses the areas of security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development.

(*spoke in Russian*)

Another reason for the international community to be concerned is the growing production and smuggling of drugs. In 2007, raw-opium production in Afghanistan increased by more than 35 percent over that in 2006, and the size of the opium-poppy harvest has reached dangerous levels. Here, we should note that the primary flow of heroin passes through the States of Central Asia and the Russian Federation. A considerable portion of it ends up in transit countries, unfortunately, while the rest of it is shipped to Europe.

The constant increase in opium production in Afghanistan and the instability along its borders are

compelling the neighbouring countries to pool their efforts to counter the drug threat. As a result, in November 2007, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre was established in Almaty, Kazakhstan, as part of a pilot project. The Centre will become fully operational once it has established ties with Interpol, with the law enforcement agencies of the countries in Central Asia and the Russian Federation and with other regional structures.

Kazakhstan welcomes the assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in establishing the Centre. It is our hope that the UNODC will continue to make efforts in that regard and that it will increase its technical assistance to the Central Asian region in general. We also reaffirm our readiness to support efforts to establish a counter-narcotics belt along Afghanistan's borders, within the framework of the CSTO. We hope that these counter-narcotics and counter-terrorist efforts will be accompanied by genuine social and economic programmes, in particular for average citizens.

At the same time, however, the development process cannot place in the absence of security. In that connection, the primary aim of the international community should be to strengthen the institutions and security forces of the Afghan State to fight the growing production of opium and the activities of extremists. We express our deep gratitude to those United Nations Member States that are making genuine contributions to the reform of the security sector in Afghanistan, including reform in the military, political and judicial areas, in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and in the fight against illegal drugs.

Furthermore, we believe that international assistance should be provided directly to recipients through the establishment of effective and transparent

allocation and monitoring mechanisms under the auspices of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) or other intergovernmental and regional organizations.

For its part, Kazakhstan has continued to provide bilateral assistance to Afghanistan in rebuilding the economy and stabilizing the situation in the country. In late 2007, the Government of Kazakhstan adopted a programme of assistance to Afghanistan, with a budget of \$3 million thus far. Under that programme, Afghanistan has been provided with wheat, and resources have been allocated to build roads, hospitals and schools in a number of provinces. In addition, we are considering the possibility of providing assistance in retraining officers of the Afghan police and border service in Kazakh training institutions.

As a partner country located in the region, the Government of Kazakhstan expresses its readiness to provide a venue, if necessary, for the international forum to discuss the actions to be taken by the international community to further improve the situation in Afghanistan. Kazakhstan remains committed to efforts by international partners for the Afghan people in establishing a better future for that country.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our hope that the work of the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Kai Eide, be productive and successful.

The President (spoke in Russian): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.20 p.m.

**Security Council**

Sixty-third year

*Provisional***5852nd** meeting

Thursday, 13 March 2008, 1.05 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Viločić
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. McBride
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 1.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Mr. Nsengimana (Rwanda) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in

accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2008/171, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1804 (2008).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

**Security Council**

Sixty-third year

*Provisional***5853rd** meetingMonday, 17 March 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Kafando
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Mubarak
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	South Africa	Ms. Qwabe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. McKenzie Smith
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda**Non-Proliferation**Briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established
pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

Briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the course of its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Johan Verbeke, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006). I now give the floor to Ambassador Verbeke.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium): This is my fifth 90-day report to the Security Council, which I am delivering in accordance with paragraph 18 of resolution 1737 (2006). The report covers the period 19 December 2007 to 17 March 2008, during which the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) held no session of informal consultations, but carried out its work outside the meeting room.

As members are aware, paragraph 5 of resolution 1737 (2006) stipulates that States shall notify the Committee of the supply, sale or transfer of all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology covered by documents S/2006/814 and S/2006/815, the export of which to the Islamic Republic of Iran is not prohibited by subparagraphs 3 (b), 3 (c) or 4 (a) of the resolution. During the reporting period, the Committee received three notifications from a Member State with reference to that paragraph. All three notifications related to the construction of the nuclear power plant in Bushehr, Iran.

Paragraph 15 of resolution 1737 (2006) provides for notifications by relevant States to the Committee of the intention to make or receive payments or to authorize the unfreezing of funds in connection with contracts entered into prior to the listing of persons and entities in the annexes to resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007). The Committee received two such notifications.

Paragraph 19 of resolution 1737 and paragraph 8 of resolution 1747 (2007) concern the submission by all States of reports to the Committee on the implementation of those two resolutions. Since I last briefed the Council, the Committee has received one additional report under both resolutions, bringing the total number of reports under resolution 1737 (2006) to 88 and the total number of reports under resolution 1747 (2007) to 72.

During the reporting period, the Committee received and responded to two written queries from Member States requesting clarification on certain aspects of the sanctions regime imposed by resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007).

Finally, the Committee issued its annual report for 2007 (S/2007/780) in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

Before concluding, let me note that, just two weeks ago, by its resolution 1803 (2008) of 3 March, the Security Council adopted additional measures relating to Iran. These measures include broadening the scope of the proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities and nuclear weapons delivery systems-related embargo; extension of the assets freeze to individuals and entities listed in annexes I and III of the resolution and expansion of the scope of that measure; introduction of a travel ban on individuals listed in annex II of the resolution as well as on any additional persons designated by the Security Council or the Committee; and, finally, extension of the travel notification requirement to individuals listed in annex I of the resolution as well as to any additional persons designated by the Security Council or the Committee.

In addition, the Council called upon all States to exercise vigilance in the areas of public provided financial support for trade with Iran and of banking with Iran, and, in accordance with States' national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, in particular the law of the sea and relevant civil aviation agreements, to inspect the cargoes to and from Iran of aircraft and vessels, at their airports and seaports, owned or operated by two Iranian companies, provided that there were reasonable grounds to believe that the aircraft or vessel was transporting goods prohibited under resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) or 1803 (2008). In cases when the aforementioned inspection of cargoes is undertaken,

the Council requires all States to submit to it within five working days a written report on the inspection. I note paragraph 14 of resolution 1803 (2008) in particular, since it broadens the scope of the Committee's mandate as set out in paragraph 18 of resolution 1737 (2006), to also include the measures imposed in resolutions 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008).

I wish to assure the Council that the Committee will continue to discharge its expanded mandate carefully and will, in this context, remind all Member States of the expectations of the Council regarding national reporting on the implementation measures under the three resolutions. The members of the Committee will be meeting in informal consultations tomorrow, with a view to considering adapting the guidelines to the newly adopted resolution 1803 (2008) and to address other questions in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States delegation wishes to express our appreciation for Ambassador Verbeke's continued leadership as the Chairman of the Security Council's Iran sanctions Committee and for his report to the Council today. Mr. Verbeke's efforts have been essential in the Committee's execution of its mandate, particularly in encouraging States to submit reports detailing their efforts to implement the Chapter VII sanctions imposed by the Council on Iran in resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007).

While the number of reports received continues to rise, many remain outstanding. We urge all States that have not yet submitted their implementation reports to the Committee to do so as soon as possible. Resolution 1803 (2008), adopted two weeks ago, includes a similar reporting request, and we encourage all States to submit reports detailing their efforts to implement it.

The Council adopted resolution 1803 (2008) because Iran's violations of Council resolutions not only have continued, but are deepening. As the most recent report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. ElBaradei, of 22 February 2008, made clear, Iran is continuing with enrichment- and heavy water-related activities, is dramatically expanding the number of operating centrifuges and has even begun developing a

new generation of centrifuges, testing one of them with nuclear fuel.

Moreover, Director General ElBaradei's report, the IAEA secretariat's technical briefing on 25 February and the IAEA Board of Governors meeting on 5 March presented troubling indications of Iran's weaponization efforts. We stand firmly behind the IAEA requirement that Iran must fully disclose any weapons-related work and facilitate IAEA verification that all such work has ceased.

The international community has good reason to be concerned about Iran's activities to acquire nuclear weapons capability. At stake is the security of a vital region of the world and the credibility of the Security Council and the IAEA. The Council has made clear its sincere intention to resolve this issue diplomatically. That is a goal that the United States strongly shares. Absent Iranian cooperation, however, we must continue to implement each of the Security Council's decisions and pursue our dual-track strategy of increasing pressure on Iran while offering a path to negotiations.

Our delegation looks forward to continuing to work with others here to execute the Committee's mandate to ensure the most robust and comprehensive implementation possible of these resolutions, and we call on Iran to engage in constructive negotiations over the future of its nuclear programme. Such negotiations, if successful, would have profound benefits for Iran and the Iranian people.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I will be brief. First of all, I wish to thank my neighbour at the Council table and my friend, Johan Verbeke, for having presented the 90-day report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), which he has delivered in the clearest possible manner. In its capacity as a Vice-Chairman of that important Committee, my delegation of course assures him of our fullest cooperation.

We have noted certain points from his statement upon which we would like to comment. We should like to comment on the preparation of national reports, clarification requests by Member States and the Committee's taking into account of resolution 1803 (2008).

With regard to national reporting on implementation of resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747

(2007), we note that work remains to be done. We believe that the Committee should consider creating frameworks for writing such reports to assist Member States. Such frameworks could, for example, take the form of questionnaires. That would facilitate diligent reporting by Member States, in accordance with paragraph 19 of resolution 1737 (2006) and paragraph 8 of resolution 1747 (2007), and would make it easier for the Committee to use the reports.

Concerning requests for clarification about certain aspects of the sanctions regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the 1737 Committee should, to the extent possible and within the framework of its mandate, have a proactive information strategy regarding the experience it has gained. That would mean providing States with the answers to questions

repeatedly asked in clarification requests. In our view, such a strategy would make it possible to raise States' awareness about effective sanctions implementation.

As regards resolution 1803 (2008), adopted by the Security Council on 3 March 2008, we believe it is important that the Committee take into account the additional competences entrusted to it by that new resolution. We welcome the changes that the Committee plans to make to its guidelines to adapt them to the resolution.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.